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# central VOICE

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2014

# BI SEXUALS

## An Invisible Majority?

BY MIKE WOOD

Every member of the LGBT community understands that acceptance of who we are is of utmost importance in our lives. Yet there's one letter in the LGBT that is under the microscope of late and seems to be having its very existence questioned: Bisexuals.

According to the Williams Institute at UCLA School of Law, among the 3.5% of the U.S. population who identify as lesbian, gay or bisexual, bisexuals comprise a slight majority (1.8% compared to 1.7% who identify as lesbian or gay). So if there are actually more bisexuals in this country, why is this group such an invisible majority?

Mention bisexuality and it's easily misunderstood by the larger part of the population, including heterosexuals and gays. The idea that a person can be attracted to both men and women is confusing for many to process, especially since traditional societal structures classify sexuality as one or the other, with no room for flexibility or fluidity.

**"...it's sort of a prerequisite that they're at least okay with my bisexuality, even if they don't fully understand it."**

Jeff Waters, 27, started self-identifying as bisexual just a few years ago and has only recently come out to his family and a handful of friends. "When I was a teenager, I knew that I wasn't straight, but I wasn't sure exactly what I was, which is why I didn't come out until more recently—I didn't really know what to come out as, and didn't really have a ton of examples of bisexual people to point to." While he's currently single, he does say that dating can be inhibiting: "Before I agree to meet up with someone, it's sort of a prerequisite that they're at least okay with my bisexuality, even if they don't fully understand it. But I do get a lot of messages from other men who say things like 'message me when you learn you're just gay', and women who, across the board, say 'I don't date bi guys - sorry!'"

Basilio A. Bonilla Jr., 23, identified as heterosexual until just about a year ago when he acknowledged to himself that he is bisexual. When he ran for Bethlehem

*Continued on page 28*

# Are Labels Useful?

BY FRANK PIZZOLI

## MILLENNIALS SPEAK OUT

*Labels are for clothing not people,* so the saying goes.

Yet in today's "selfie" world each of us can make our own rules. Monikers within the gay world - which some call our alphabet soup - have evolved from "LGBT" to which has been added a *Q* to represent "questioning" to which is added an *A* for allies. Then we have another *Q* for "queers," who embrace the slur as a way to disarm the user and empower themselves..

Hard to know what's politically correct or acceptable *du jour* if that's your goal.

*Central Voice* recently sat down with a group of younger folks at the LGBT Community Center, Harrisburg. We asked them to describe their chosen labels. To enlighten us with their whys and wherefores.

We asked how each participant thought of himself or herself vis-a-vis a label or social expectation.

Rickie, 18, told us "I just knew I wasn't supposed to be born male. I just feel a stronger connection with men than women."

Liandra, 20, said, "I call myself bisexual and currently am in a heterosexual relationship."

"No labels apply to me while I'm alone, I'm just me," Denzel, 21, said.

Solona, 22, prefers to identify "as a transsexual woman who is mostly gynephilic, meaning that I am mostly attracted to people who are women and/or present as female." She likes to call herself "transsexual" as opposed to the umbrella term "transgender" because she doesn't "identify as transgender before deciding to medically transition with hormone replacement therapy."

How comfortable are participants with how others may label them?

Denzel is sensitive to the need of others to have a label or designation for someone. He is usually comfortable with whatever label others may use to describe him. "I am this way because labels are limiting, I choose not to limit myself," he explains.

Rickie seems comfortable too with the ways others may view his sexuality. "I feel mutual. If that person feels that way, let them. Just because it seems the same, does not mean it is."

Liandra says, "I am bisexual because I love both genders

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**Is Race Still A Problem?** pg 20

**Mind Your Millennials** pg 8-11

# What's on *your* list?

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# Political Update

## • Marriage Update: 35 States Now Allow

Less than 48 hours after the U.S. Supreme Court decided to allow marriage to move forward in Indiana, Wisconsin, Utah, Oklahoma and Virginia, the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals followed suit by striking down marriage bans in Idaho and Nevada. This decision should also bring marriage to Arizona, Montana and Alaska in the near future. The Ninth Circuit decision brings to 35 the number of states that allow same-sex marriage. Sixty-four percent of the American people now live in a state where gay people can marry with more states having ended the exclusion of gay couples from marriage than had ended bans on interracial marriage when the Supreme Court brought the country to national resolution in Loving v. Virginia. In total, 42 federal and state courts in the past year have ruled in favor of the freedom to marry for same-sex couples with only one federal and one state ruling going the other way.

## • Gay & Extramarital Sex = 100 Lashes

BuzzFeed's J. Lester Feder reports that the Indonesian province of Aceh recently approved a broad legislative package based on Islamic Sharia law that includes a punishment of 100 lashes for homosexuality and extramarital sex. The law, which also applies to non-Muslims, also punishes the drinking of alcohol, gambling, and mixing between men and women. Aceh won autonomy — and the right to impose Sharia codes — in 2001 as part of a deal to end a long-running fight for independence from Indonesia, making it one of the few places in Southeast Asia under Sharia laws. The small Southeast Asian state of Brunei has come under intense pressure after imposing an even more severe set of rules earlier this year.

## • ISIS Describes Gays as Pedophiles,

*The Washington Blade's* Chris Johnson reports that the terrorist organization know as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria has released a video that reveals its animosity extends to LGBT people in the Western world. Brandishing an AK-47 rifle, an apparent ISIS fighter in an Internet propaganda video advises Muslims living in non-Muslim countries to move to areas controlled by ISIS. "If you have family in these kafir [infidel] countries [i.e., countries ruled by non-Muslims], what is gonna happen most probably?" the fighter says. "You don't have control of your children. Maybe in some of the countries it is a must for you to put your children in the kafir schools, and who's gonna teach your children? It's gonna be maybe a gay, maybe a drug dealer, maybe a pedophile, you know? So it's very important for you to protect your children from these animals, from these dirty people, Allah says that they are the worst of creatures."

## • Facebook Requires Real Names

Facebook requires LGBT people to use real names even in countries where homosexuality is a crime. As news spreads that police are targeting LGBT people through FaceBook in countries like Egypt, a Facebook spokesperson tells BuzzFeed News the "real name" policy applies to FaceBook users everywhere. A Facebook spokesman has confirmed that the company's controversial policy requiring users to give their real names applies even in countries where police are known to be monitoring the network to enforce laws against homosexuality. The real name policy is "a policy for everyone that uses Facebook," spokesman Scott Souvall told BuzzFeed News. Though officials in countries like Egypt are known to be monitoring the network partly to enforce anti-LGBT laws, Souvall said, Facebook believes the policy is important to keeping users safe. "Having people use the names they use in their everyday life on Facebook makes them more accountable, and also helps us root out accounts created for malicious purposes, like harassment, fraud, impersonation and hate speech."

## • Grindr Warns Egyptian Users

"Police may be posing as LGBT on social media to entrap you," said a warning Grindr sent to Egyptian users in late September. BuzzFeed's J. Lester Feder reports that six men were sentenced by an Egyptian court in September to two years in prison with labor for allegedly advertising their apartment on Facebook for men to have sex with each other for a fee of $200 per night, reports the state-owned Egyptian news site Ahram Online based on information from "a judicial source." This case may be the first case in which Egyptians have been caught on social media for charges of homosexuality, something human rights activists have warned could become widespread as the Egyptian government widens its crackdown on LGBT rights. Since October 2013, around 80 people are known to have been arrested on allegations of homosexuality, including "eight men who are due in court on Saturday for appearing in a video that shows a couple of men exchanging rings that made headlines throughout the Arabic press as a "gay wedding." As the regime of President Abdel Fattah el-Sisi has stepped up these arrests, human rights activists had speculated that they were targeting people through social media, and Egyptian officials "told BuzzFeed News that Facebook groups for gay Egyptians are being closely monitored. But there was little solid information about how social media had been used to entrap LGBT people.

## • Transgender Woman Found Murdered

Alejandra Leos, a transgender woman was been found murdered in Memphis, Tennessee. Leos was shot dead just steps away from her home in Berkshire Sept. 6. Police mis-gendered her in initial reports, but her family told WREG that she was a transgender woman. Family members believe that someone had been harassing Leos prior to her death. Police say that the investigation into the killing is ongoing, but that they have not identified the shooter. However, a police spokesperson declined to say whether the killing was being treated as a potential hate crime. Describing the woman's kindness, Smith said: "'You don't have a jacket? I'll give it to you'. "It was to the point where if you didn't have no place to sleep [Alejandra] would help you."

## • Highest-paid US Female CEO Was a Man

Martine Rothblatt, 59, who founded the $5 billion pharmaceutical firm United Therapeutics and also co-founded Sirius, had sex reassignment surgery in 1994. "I can't claim that what I have achieved is equivalent to what a woman has achieved. For the first half of my life, I was male," Rothblatt, who has four kids and is still married to her wife of more than 30 years, told New York Magazine. Rothblatt made $38 million last year as head of United Therapeutics, which she launched to create medicine for her daughter, who suffers from primary pulmonary hypertension. In addition to being uber-wealthy, the CEO is obsessed with artificial intelligence and has a lifelike talking robot modeled after her spouse. Her book, "Virtually Human: The Promise and Peril of Digital Immortality," was recently released.

## • Plurality of Utahns Ready for Marriage

A new statewide poll conducted by Benenson Strategy Group for Freedom to Marry finds a plurality of Utahns – 49% to 48% – agree that same sex-couples should be allowed to get a state-issued marriage license. Moreover, 61% believe legalizing marriage for same-sex couples in Utah is inevitable and will happen in the state within the next five years. And, by a large majority (67%), they want the U.S. Supreme Court to settle this question once and for all. These numbers come as the court begins its term to consider Utah's marriage case, Kitchen v. Herbert, along with four others, for the upcoming session. The findings of the poll, conducted Sept. 21 to 23 of 500 adults over 18 across the state, also show that 94% believe the freedom to marry will not impact their marriage, with 84% saying it won't impact their family and 65% saying it won't adversely impact the state.

## • Rutgers Approves Preferred Name Policy

Rutgers University has approved a student preferred name policy, Vaishali Gauba reports for The Daily Targum. According to the policy, the university's class rosters and electronic grading and information system will allow students to use preferred names instead of legal names. This policy would no longer require students, especially gender-nonconforming, international and transgender students, to email professors beforehand to use different names or pronouns, said Zaneta Rago, acting director of the Center for Social Justice Education and LGBT Communities. "LGBT students and staff have been talking about the possibility of a preferred name policy for two years now, and ultimately with the creation of a new student group, the Trans*missions — the first trans and gender-nonconforming and ally student group on campus — in conjunction with RUSA, put together a preferred name bill last year,"

## • Challenger Apologizes for 'hurtful' Tweet

Jacob Dorsey, the Republican candidate in the Nov. 4 election for the 44th Assembly District apologized for using "unacceptable and hurtful language" in a post on Twitter about same-sex marriages. Five months before announcing his candidacy, Jacob Dorsey tweeted "fags need 2 leave my favorite state alone." The tweet, posted at 1:30 a.m. Christmas Day, was Dorsey's response to a U.S. Circuit Court's rejection of Utah's request to stop same-sex marriages. Dorsey, a 19-year-old Parker graduate, in May announced he is challenging Rep. Deb Kolste, D-Janesville, in the November election. "I regret using unacceptable and hurtful language on social media last year and sincerely apologize for doing so," Dorsey said in a statement. "I recognized the inappropriateness of the tweet shortly after sending it and promptly deleted it. I am a staunch supporter of traditional marriage, but the language I used is not in keeping with my character, family values and Christian upbringing, and I fully acknowledge that."

## • CA Eliminates "Gay Panic" Defense

California Assembly Bill 2501 eliminates the so-called "gay panic" and "trans panic" defenses, tactics used by defendants who claim their violent acts were triggered by the victim's sexual orientation or gender identity. The new law ensures that defendants cannot use the so-called "panic defense" in attempt to lower a charge from murder to manslaughter or to escape conviction. In addition, AB 2501 ensures that such a defense cannot be used in cases of lesser charges, such as assault.

## • GOP: Tide Shifting on Marriage

The tide is shifting for gay marriage across the country—

*Continued on page 6*

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## voice box

*E-mail your thoughts to posops@aol.com*

**GREAT**

*The PA Agenda for Women's Health story (Sept-Oct 2014) in* ***Central Voice*** *came out great. Thanks for covering such a great package of bills. I was also pleasantly surprised to see coverage of our "Not My Boss's Business" rally against Hobby Lobby.*

***Sarah Newman Boateng***
*Director of Public Affairs, Planned Parenthood Keystone*

**COLUMNISTS**

*I love that* ***Central Voice*** *has so many local people who regularly write columns and who also pen an occasional story.*

***Ben***

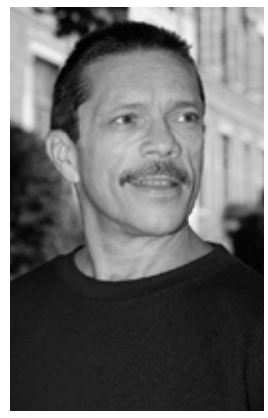
**PRACTICING HOMOSEXUALS**

*According to the Associated Press (10-6-14), the United Methodist Church, the nation's second-largest Protestant denomination with 12 million members worldwide, accepts gay members but bans "self-avowed practicing homosexuals" from becoming clergy and forbid ministers from performing same-sex marriages. I want the church to know that I am not "practicing". I have it down pat.*

***Sophonda Cox***
***reader and occasional columnist***

publisher's voice

# Talking, the Non-tech App



*Frank Pizzoli*

We read about a post-human age upon us wherein humanoids may consist of completely synthetic artificial intelligences or a symbiosis of human and artificial intelligence. There's talk of "uploaded consciousnesses" or demo models that reflect cumulatively profound technological augmentations to a biological human, like a cyborg.

For now we have the Good2Go App designed to solve the problem of date rape and sexual assault by making consent as easy as pressing a button. Whatever happened to teaching children about alcohol by how we as adults consume libations? Hopefully, when children are old enough to make drinking decisions they will have learned by our example. That's an app, all human and no fee included. The downloading is in our example to others.

The Good2Go app requires a potential sexual partner to answer a few questions before you pull up to the curb and beep the horn.

*"Are we Good2Go?"*

Possible answers: *"No thanks," "Yes, but we need to talk,"* or *"I'm Good2Go."*

Potential partners then get to see what's been selected.

*"No thanks"* means there's no consent, so there's no sex.

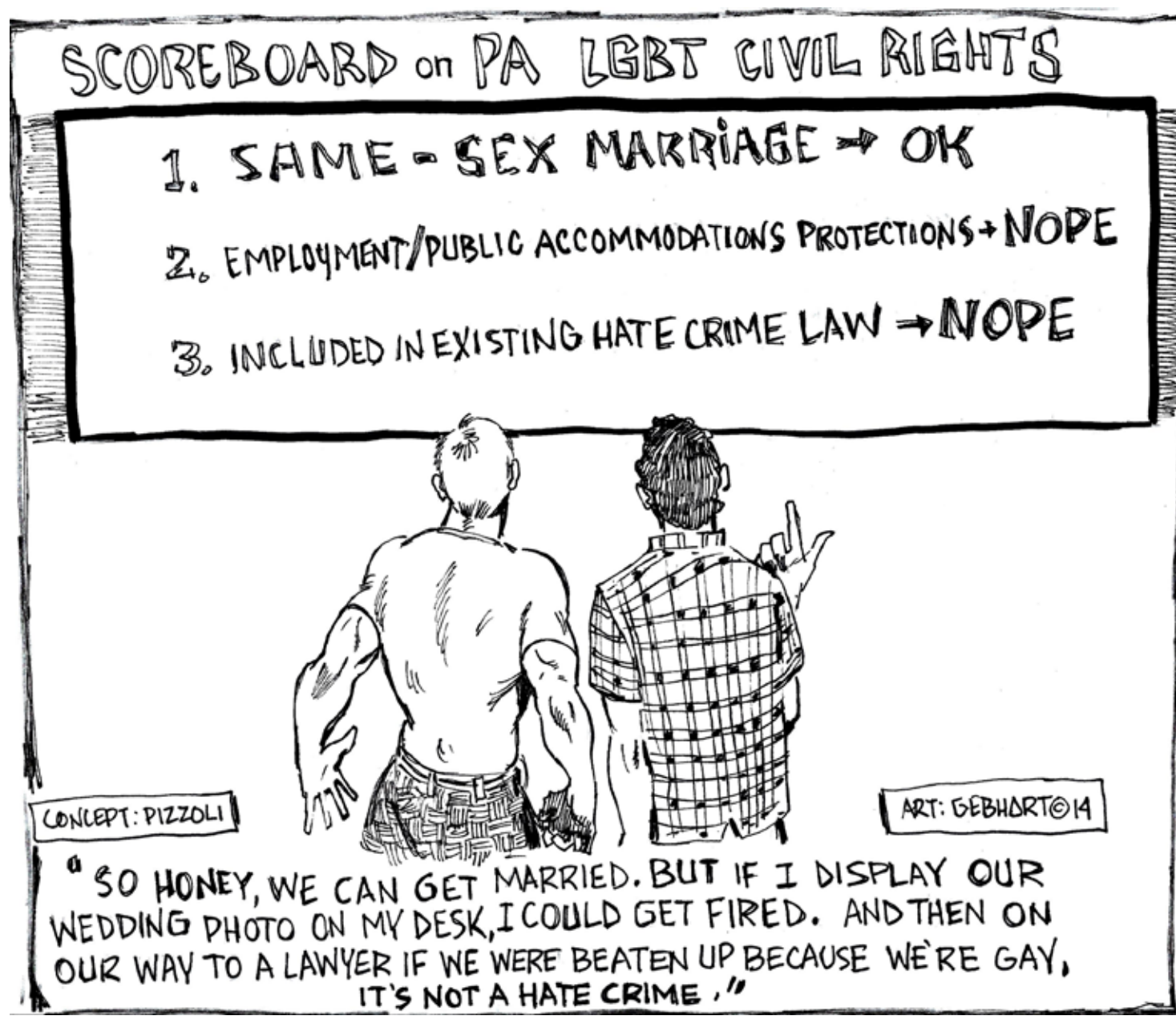
*"Yes, but we need to talk"* means they have some questions they want to ask.

*"I'm Good2Go"* means there's an all-clear - after the partner inputs a self-assessment of how intoxicated they are.

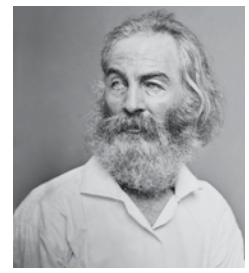
If *"Pretty wasted"* is selected, the answer to *"Are we Good2Go?"* automatically switches to *"No thanks."* The app maintains that you can't consent if you are *"pretty wasted."* This would require a user to be under the influence of alcohol *and* to be honest, a behavior, again, that could be taught by adults to children in a non-tech way: Talk to them, often, about alcohol, sex, drugs, rock and roll. You're their parent or guardian not their best friend.

However, if *"Sober," "Mildly intoxicated"* or *"Intoxicated but Good2Go"* are entered, then the app asks for the person's phone number so it can confirm their identity and the couple is ready to have sex. The person's phone number is not stored in the partner's phone but just used to confirm identity.

Lee Ann Allman, a creator of the app, said she was inspired to make it after talking with her university-age kids about sexual assault and noticing how confused they were. Would they be confused if growing up they "talked" about decision making? Good to Talk, the human app.


SCOREBOARD on PA LGBT CIVIL RIGHTS
1. SAME-SEX MARRIAGE → OK
2. EMPLOYMENT/PUBLIC ACCOMMODATIONS PROTECTIONS → NOPE
3. INCLUDED IN EXISTING HATE CRIME LAW → NOPE
CONCEPT: PIZZOLI
ART: GEBHART©14
"SO HONEY, WE CAN GET MARRIED. BUT IF I DISPLAY OUR WEDDING PHOTO ON MY DESK, I COULD GET FIRED. AND THEN ON OUR WAY TO A LAWYER IF WE WERE BEATEN UP BECAUSE WE'RE GAY, IT'S NOT A HATE CRIME."

# Old Voice, Still Central



This Fall we saw re-introduction of legislation to include sexual orientation and gender identity in Pennsylvania's Hate Crime Law. The LGBT Caucus in the General Assembly had earlier introduced legislation to amend the state's Human Relations Act to include LGBT protections. These heady steps taken by advocates and activists raise the pitch level of the debate. Exasperations flow forth from supporters and opponents. Perhaps what we lose as our hoarse throats speak is the essence of the matter. At the end of each day, we want simply to love and be loved with every protection, accommodation, and consideration provided to others by a just society. For that perspective we offer Walt Whitman.

*- Central Voice*

## *When I Heard at the Close of the Day*

*When I heard at the close of the day how my name had been receiv'd with plaudits in the capitol, still it was not a happy night for me that follow'd,*

*And else when I carous'd, or when my plans were accomplish'd, still I was not happy,*

*But the day when I rose at dawn from the bed of perfect health, refresh'd, singing, inhaling the ripe breath of autumn,*

*When I saw the full moon in the west grow pale and disappear in the morning light,*

*When I wander'd alone over the beach, and undressing bathed, laughing with the cool waters, and saw the sun rise,*

*And when I thought how my dear friend my lover was on his way coming, O then I was happy,*

*O then each breath tasted sweeter, and all that day my food nourish'd me more, and the beautiful day pass'd well,*

*And the next came with equal joy, and with the next at evening came my friend,*

*And that night while all was still I heard the waters roll slowly continually up the shores,*

*I heard the hissing rustle of the liquid and sands as directed to me whispering to congratulate me,*

*For the one I love most lay sleeping by me under the same cover in the cool night,*

*In the stillness in the autumn moonbeams his face was inclined toward me,*

*And his arm lay lightly around my breast—and that night I was happy.*

Walt Whitman was an American poet, essayist, and journalist.

# PA Needs to Play Catch Up on LGBT Laws

*By Katie Somers, Communications Chair*
*Capital Region Stonewall Democrats*

Did you know that the LGBTQ community can get married one day and fired the next day in Pennsylvania? Furthermore, did you know that Pennsylvania legally allows same-sex couples to marry, yet doesn't protect the LGBTQ community from hate crimes? Lastly, did you know that the LGBTQ community is not fully protected under our current laws?

Currently sitting over at Capitol Hill, we have House Bill 300 and Senate Bill 300, companion pieces of legislation that would add LGBTQ protections to state law. Governor Tom Corbett (R), supports ENDA, with numerous sponsors and co-sponsors like, Patty H. Kim (D), Brian Sims (D), Daylin Leach (D) and Rob Teplitz (D), who have signed on to the bill, that would help protect the LGBTQ community from being discriminated against in the workplace or being denied public accommodations and the like.

Yet, people like Representative Daryl Metcalfe (R), 12th Legislative District, refuse to let HB/SB300 come to the floor for a vote. Instead, Metcalfe encourages his constituents to sign his petition to help protect traditional marriage citing: "only a marriage between one man and one woman shall be valid or recognized as a marriage in this Commonwealth, and neither the Commonwealth nor any of its political subdivisions shall create or recognize a legal status identical or substantially equivalent to that of marriage for unmarried individuals."

Congruently in Pennsylvania, a gay couple walking down the streets in Center City, Philadelphia, is brutally attacked for being gay. We call it a "hate crime", but unfortunately in Pennsylvania the LGBTQ community is not protected under the current hate crime legislation (a.k.a. Ethnic Intimidation.) That means if/when arrests are made, the perpetrators could not be charged with violating Pennsylvania's Ethnic Intimidation law.

The fact is that Pennsylvania is the only Northeast state to NOT have language in their hate crime law that encompasses the LGBTQ community. State Representative Brian Sims (D), 182nd Legislative District, is leading the charge to bring to light the holes in our current hate crime legislation. No doubt, he will be calling on fellow legislators vote on HB177/SB42, which would add sexual orientation under the hate crime laws.

In order to protect our rights, the LGBTQ community's rights, we must elect Democratic officials who will be champions for full equality. The Capital Region Stonewall Democrats, a Political Action Committee whose goal is to advocate for equal rights for all individuals, regardless of sexual orientation, work along with other organizations to bring full equality and protect the LGBTQ community, under the law, in our home state. We work diligently to get our endorsed candidates, pro-LGBTQ candidates, elected in to office. To see our list of endorsed pro-LGBTQ candidates, please visit our 2014 Endorsements page of our Website.

*Info: www.CapitalStonewall.org; Facebook, Twitter @CRStonewall*

# Taxpayer Protection Act Shields Working Families

*Submitted by Commonwealth Foundation for Public Policy Alternatives*

Recently, the Senate Finance Committee passed Senate Bill 7, commonly known as the Taxpayer Protection Act (TPA), out of committee, signaling that protecting taxpayers' pocketbooks is high on lawmakers' priority lists in the Fall session.

"The Taxpayer Protection Act promises Pennsylvanians a simple yet effective shield against unsustainable increases in state spending—and the tax increases that inevitably follow," commented Nathan Benefield, vice president of policy analysis for the Commonwealth Foundation. "Guardrails on spending growth are widely supported in polling and, as we've seen when such measures have been enacted in other states, promise to boost job growth and ease the tax burden on middle class families."

The TPA limits spending increases to the rate of inflation plus the state's population growth and establishes a "Rainy Day Fund" that can be tapped to balance the budget during a recession. TPA limits could be exceeded with a two-thirds majority vote of both House and Senate.

"Despite what special interest groups may say, the Taxpayer Protection Act does not mandate any spending cuts," Benefield continued. "It simply limits the rate of future spending growth to a responsible level."

even in the GOP. Six Republican congressional challengers this year support same-sex marriage, along with four House incumbents and one Senate incumbent running for reelection—the most in history, according to the Freedom to Marry campaign. If they win, they'll join three current members of Congress not up for reelection who've publicly voiced support for the issue.

At least one of those challengers is trying to use a pro-gay-marriage position to her advantage. Monica Wehby, an Oregon Republican running for the Senate, released a TV ad Tuesday putting her support for same-sex marriage in the spotlight. The commercial features Ben West, one of the plaintiffs who successfully sued in Oregon federal court for the right to marry his now-husband, Paul Rummell. "I'm a very independent-minded person, like our state," Wehby told Politico. "I've always felt government should stay out of it. This isn't a change in thought for me at all."

## • MD Transgender Law in Effect

A Maryland law that bans anti-transgender discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations is now in full effect. "We've taken one step closer to ensuring that all Marylanders are protected from discrimination under the law," Gov. Martin O'Malley told the *Washington Blade*. LGBT rights advocates also welcomed the law going into effect. "This law is critical in the lives of transgender Marylanders," said Carrie Evans, executive director of Equality Maryland, in a statement on Tuesday. "For too long it has been okay to fire transgender people, kick them out of their apartments and deny them services at a restaurant; tomorrow this will be rectified."

## • Olympics Intro Anti-discrimination Clause

The International Olympic Committee (IOC) has introduced a new anti-discrimination clause into its host city contract, but noted that this step alone will not play a meaningful role in preventing discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people throughout the Olympic Games. Human Rights First urged the IOC to take further steps to ensure equality is an indisputable part of all future Olympic Games by updating Principle 6 of the Olympic Charter to include discrimination with regard to sexual orientation and gender identity. "While making anti-discrimination a more explicit part of the site selection process is important, the fundamental problem of discrimination at the Olympics remains the same," said Human Rights First's Shawn Gaylord who was part of the organization's delegation to the Sochi Olympics. "As long as Principle 6 does not explicitly include sexual orientation and gender identity in the list of categories against which discrimination is prohibited, countries that have no tradition of protecting LGBT people or, worse yet, no interest in doing so, will not understand their responsibilities any differently tomorrow than they did yesterday. The international community must continue to press the IOC to make a formal change to include sexual orientation and gender identity in Principle 6." During the 2014 Olympic Games in Sochi, Russian authorities arrested dozens of LGBT activists, allies, and journalists in an attempt to silence voices of dissent. Following the conclusion of the games, Human Rights First worked with nineteen members of the House of Representatives and a broad-based coalition of human rights organizations to urge the IOC to mandate equality for all people, regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity, at future Olympic Games.

## • House Cte. Thwarts Gay Vet Benefits

By a 12-13 vote, the US House Committee on Veterans' Affairs voted down an amendment that would have defined veteran spousal benefits with the Veteran Spouses Equal Treatment Act. That legislation changes Title 38 of the U.S. Code to ensure the flow of spousal benefits to gay, lesbian and bisexual veterans. In plainer language, if passed the measure would have enabled veterans with same-sex spouses to receive partner benefits wherever they live in the country. The vote was along party lines with Republicans voting "no" and Democrats voting "yes" with the exception of Rep. Jon Runyan (R-N.J.), a co-sponsor of the Employment Non-Discrimination Act, who broke with his party to vote "yes" on the amendment. "We are incredibly disappointed, and it's a sad reflection on the state of our Congress when our elected officials cannot put aside their differences to end this discrimination," said Dr. Lori Hensic, the American Military Partner Association.

NJ 3rd Circuit Upholds Ex-Gay Therapy Ban The Third Circuit Court of Appeals has ruled that New Jersey's ban on efforts to change sexual orientation, also known as ex-gay therapy, is constitutional. This was another defeat for the Liberty Counsel, Alliance Defending Freedom, and NARTH, who argued that the ban inhibits the free speech and religious freedom of therapists who provide the ineffective and harmful treatments. The appeals court largely agreed with the district judge's opinion, but did make one notable distinction. The lower court had defined ex-gay therapy as "conduct," not speech, even though it consists primarily (if not exclusively) of "talk therapy." The 3rd Circuit argued that speech is speech, not conduct, but that doesn't mean the speech is protected by the First Amendment.

## • School Bans Bullying

The Green Bay (WI) Area School District has banned bullying based on gender identity, and educators are looking for other ways to make the school day easier for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender kids. The district is among the first in Wisconsin to train staff on related issues and consider ways to make gay-straight alliances more effective, said Brian Juchems, of the Madison-based Gay Straight Alliance for Safe Schools. Each of the Green Bay district's four high schools and Washington Middle School have GSA groups. The district provided training for staff and parents last year. "We know there is bullying and harassment going on, and we want students to know that that is not acceptable," said Elizabeth Wetzel Gracyalny, a social worker at East High School and the district's lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and questioning coordinator. In addition to the bullying policy, district officials are looking at other measures to make schools more accommodating for transgender students, such as gender-neutral bathrooms or special locker room accommodations. It's working with a state advocacy group to make changes.

## • Israel Surveils, Blackmails Gay Palestinians

Israel has sold itself internationally as a gay Mecca. This freedom is regularly cited by advocates for Israel in the west, making stark comparisons to Muslim societies that repress gays. Well here's a new spin on that claim reports Mondoweiss: Israeli intelligence pried into Palestinians' phone calls and internet activity so as to identify and blackmail Palestinian gays and turn them into informants against other Palestinians. Haaretz has a story up on 43 reservists in Israeli intelligence who are refusing to serve because of the "political persecution" of Palestinians. The reservists write that while surveillance of Israeli citizens is strictly limited, "the Palestinians are not afforded this protection." They declare in a letter to the Israeli P.M.: "we refuse to take part in actions against Palestinians and refuse to continue serving as tools in deepening the military control over the Occupied Territories." An unsigned piece in the Guardian details testimonies from intelligence veterans and exposes practices reminiscent of totalitarian countries: "Any Palestinian is exposed to monitoring by the Israeli Big Brother." Here are selections where the recovering spooks describe using Palestinians' sexual practices to turn them into informants, or exploit the Palestinians' need for medical care in Israel. "No boundaries were set for us, for both passive activities such as gathering intelligence, and for active initiatives that had an impact on people's lives. If anyone interests us, we'd collect information on his or her economic situation and mental state. Then we would plan how we can perform an operation around this individual, in order to turn them into a collaborator or something of the sort. Any information that might enable extortion of an individual is considered relevant information. Whether said individual is of a certain sexual orientation, cheating on his wife, or in need of treatment in Israel or the West Bank – he is a target for blackmail."

## • Gambia Passes Anti-Gay Bill

Human Rights First said passage of a discriminatory bill by Gambia's National Assembly represents an alarming trend threatening the human rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) Africans. The bill now awaits approval by President Yahya Jammeh, calls for life sentences for some homosexual acts determined to be "aggravated homosexuality." The bill is similar in language and penalty to the egregious Anti-Homosexuality Act that was recently struck down in Uganda. "This bill is part of the rising tide of homophobia in many African nations, whose government leaders are working to deny the rights of their LGBT citizens through a campaign of misinformation and discriminatory laws and policies," said Human Rights First's Shawn Gaylord. "The United States and the international community should continue to work closely with African human rights activists and civil society leaders to promote the protection of the human rights of all Africans." Gambian President Jammeh has made it clear in public statements that he would likely support anti-gay legislation, calling homosexuality one of the "biggest threats to human existence." During a recent speech marking Gambia's Independence Day, President Jammeh stated, "We will fight these vermins called homosexuals or gays the same way we are fighting malaria-causing mosquitoes, if not more aggressively." Secretary of State John Kerry issued a statement following this speech stating that "The United States is deeply troubled by the hateful rhetoric used by President Jammeh," and calling on on the Government of Gambia to "protect the human rights of all Gambians."

## • Louisiana Judge Rules Ban Unconstitutional

A Louisiana state judge has ruled in favor of a same-sex couple, saying the state's ban on gay marriage is unconstitutional. The ruling compels the state to recognize the out-of-state marriage of the plaintiffs in the case but its full extent is not immediately clear because it is temporarily under seal, said Bruce Parker, a spokesman for Equality Louisiana. "This judgment of the court is a sign of hope amid the maelstrom of despair and confusion that Louisiana's LGBT community has lived through recently," C. Welton Gaddy, president of Interfaith Alliance and a Monroe-based pastor, said in a statement. Louisiana Attorney General Buddy Caldwell plans to appeal the decision directly to the state's Supreme Court, the Times-Picayune newspaper reported. His office did not immediately return messages seeking comment. The ruling comes as the U.S. Supreme Court is expected to take up the question of gay marriage bans during its next term, which started in October, in what is likely to be the most momentous civil rights case in years. "I guess we're not in Kansas anymore, Toto!"

Never give up. And most importantly, be true to yourself. Write from your heart, in your own voice, and about what you believe in.

*~ Louise Brown*

Central VOICE

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# Young People Support LGBT Rights but Disagree on Priorities

A new national survey finds that while young people express strong support for marriage equality, they also believe the push for same-sex marriage has diverted too much attention from other important issues facing lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered individuals.

The study also shows that young people differ along racial and ethnic lines in setting priorities for advancing LGBT rights.

"Moving Beyond Marriage: What Young People of Color Think about the LGBT Agenda," is the newest report from the Black Youth Project at the University of Chicago, reporting on their findings from a nationally representative survey of 1,500 young people between the ages of 18 and 30, and conducted in June 2014. The sample includes young people from all sexual identities. The report is co-authored by Cathy J. Cohen, the David and Mary Winton Green Professor and chair, Political Science; and Jon C. Rogowski, assistant professor, Political Science at Washington University, St. Louis.

In contrast to white youth, who identified same-sex marriage as the top priority for LGBT organizations, black and Latino youth showed more concern about other issues, such as HIV/AIDS, bullying, equal employment rights and violence against LGBT individuals. Large majorities of all groups agreed that the LGBT community is subject to discrimination, and supported policies to advance LGBT rights.

"For the last decade, many LGBT organizations have worked tirelessly to expand marriage rights to same-sex couples and the public has become considerably more acceptant," Cohen said. "This report demonstrates that while young people grant strong support to marriage equality, young people—especially young people of color—also believe that several other policies should have greater priority in the fight for LGBT equality, including employment rights and prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS."

The main findings of the report include:

More black (80.2 percent) and Latino (74.9 percent) youth believe the marriage equality movement has taken too much attention away from other important LGBT issues compared to white youth (64.0 percent).

More black youth (58.0 percent) believe that LGBT issues in communities of color are not well represented by mainstream LGBT organizations than Latino (45.9 percent) and white youth (42.7 percent).

More than a third (35.0 percent) of black youth reported that HIV/AIDS is the single most important issue for LGBT organizations to address. Latino youth reported that bullying (20.1 percent) is the most important issue, while white youth (21.3 percent) reported that same-sex marriage is the most important issue.

"While some people argue that recent advances in same-sex marriage equality are an indicator of the end of discrimination against LGBT individuals, the survey participants disagreed," Cohen said. "Greater proportions of black youth than Latino and white youth believe that LGBT individuals experience discrimination."

Concern over HIV/AIDS among black youth was especially striking. The CDC has reported that among gay and bisexual men, African Americans are affected by HIV more than any other racial or ethnic group.

The survey found that black youth believe that LGBT individuals experience discrimination to a similar degree as African Americans. White and Latino youth believe that LGBT individuals experience discrimination at higher rates than other groups based on gender, race, ethnicity and religion.

"Our findings indicate that young people of color are skeptical about whether mainstream LGBT organizations advocate policies that are important for LGBT individuals in communities of color," Rogowski commented. "The data in this report may provide some guidance about how LGBT organizations may branch out beyond same-sex marriage in advocating on behalf of LGBT youth. While much has been accomplished, young people of color are reminding us that the fight for overall equality is far from over."

# Hello, My Name Is NOT *"Gaytard"*

**He [the manager] made me wear that embarrassing name tag all night.**

*By Tyler Brandt*

I've been out to my family and friends since I was in the 5th grade. I'm not ashamed of being gay, and I don't hide who I am from anyone.

After school ended last semester, I wanted to find a summer job for the usual teenage reasons: spending money for clothes, a cell phone, going out with friends, and maybe even save up a little too. I applied for a crew member position at the Taco John's in my town – Yankton, South Dakota – in early June, interviewed the next day, and started working the night shift the day after that.

I hadn't been working at Taco John's long before the night manager was saying things about me to other employees behind my back, calling me "faggot" and saying things like, "Tyler is so gay it's not even funny."

About three weeks after I'd started working there, the night manager called me into the office and handed me a name tag he'd just made. He said, "Wear this!" with a huge grin on his face like he was really proud of himself. I looked at the name tag and saw that it read "Gaytard" with little hearts on either side of the word. My mom raised me to be respectful and polite, and I didn't want to lose my job. So I put the name tag on and then said, "Okay, can I take it off now?" He just laughed at me and told me to leave it on.

He made me wear that embarrassing name tag all night.

Every time I had to help a customer, I tried to stand so that it was hidden by the register. But that didn't really make much difference because the manager kept calling me "gaytard" really loudly in front of customers for the rest of my shift: "Hey, gaytard, help this customer!" and "Take out the trash, gaytard!" It was extremely humiliating.

After I got home, I decided I just couldn't go back for more abuse at Taco John's. I want my

*Continued on page 20*

# Are Labels Useful?

*Continued from page one*

*Denzel*

*Jacob*

*Rickie*

*Leandra*

*Solona*

physically and emotionally." She adds, "I have no problem with a person similar to myself choosing a different label or letter or not acknowledging the spectrum."

Solona says, "Much of my experience being trans or queer is dependent on hormonal medication because I didn't want to put a huge amount of effort into my appearance or drastically change my presentation." She's happy with only occasionally wearing skirts, dresses, bras, and has never been a fan of makeup.

And the question everyone wants to ask: When did you know?

Liandra shares that "I first knew my sexuality was different when I was about age 9 or 10, but didn't know the label I currently use. I went with it or hid it." At about age 12, "I stopped caring what others thought about who I was. My sexuality is currently set and I am happy with where it is."

Denzel says he first knew he "was different when I was in 6th grade. I hid it from everyone for a few years. My sexuality is set for now."

**"I'm what I am. I like what I like. And no one can change that."**

Solona says, "I first knew my gender and sexuality was different probably in the first month after I turned 18. I tried having sex with a man, which disappointingly did not get me to see myself firmly as straight, bi, or gay. None of those felt right, but I could tell that something was off."

For a while, Solona viewed herself "as heteroflexible. Also in that time I, as part of creating a character to play as in a newly released fantasy RPG video game, made what would eventually become my preferred and legal name. That came on the heels of playing many other games as female protagonists in the preceding summer and I could start to see what was going on, but I pushed it out of my mind because I wasn't yet ready for accepting myself as trans. At the very least, I needed more information and courage first."

Rickie shares that he was "honestly was about 3 or 4 when I realized that something was different about me. I hid it for at least a good 4 years. I didn't fully come out until my freshman year, three years ago." With calmness he says "I'm what I am. I like what I like. And no one can change that. I'm very proud to be who I am. Wouldn't change it for the world."

## MILLENNIALS SPEAK OUT

**"I stopped caring what others thought about who I was. My sexuality is currently set and I am happy with where it is."**

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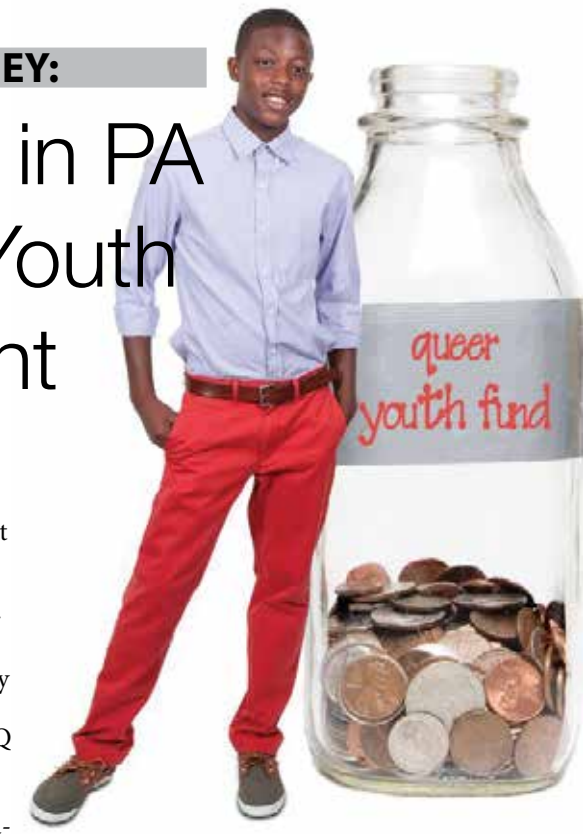
# Investing in PA LGBTQ Youth Movement




*BY JASON LANDAU GOODMAN*

The Pennsylvania Student Equality Coalition recently announced that the organization is a recipient of the 2014 Queer Youth Fund in the form of a $100,000 grant from the Liberty Hill Foundation. The foundation supports youth-led LGBTQ development and empowerment.

PSEC is the first organization in Pennsylvania to receive this honor in the grant's 12-year history. The Queer Youth Fund will dramatically increase PSEC's capacity as youth activists throughout the commonwealth. PSEC will use the support of the Queer Youth Fund to further its mission of securing safer schools and communities for all youth in Pennsylvania, and to promote youth-led advocacy efforts.

PSEC will stagger the grant equally over four years to ensure the basic funding for essential outreach and advocacy. The grant will fund three critical parts of PSEC:

***Bayard Rustin House***

The future headquarters for PSEC will be located in Harrisburg directly across the street from the State Capitol. The grant will support the utilities for the building and primary operation costs.

***Leadership opportunities***

PSEC has long recognized that the financial costs of attending regional and state meetings is an insurmountable barrier for some youth. These leadership opportunities are critical to the development of strong advocates. The coalition will now be able to provide stipends for leaders that will allow all young leaders to participate and be fully activated in the statewide LGBTQ youth movement.

***Financial sustainability***

The Queer Youth Fund will power PSEC's leadership through crafting a strong long-term fundraising plan. This work will allow PSEC's operations to be sustained and grow.

# Say *No* to the Dress

## *Lesbian Couple Denied Service*

Although the municipal web site says: Small-town charm and down home hospitality for one business in Bloomsburg, PA. that does not include a lesbian couple in search of wedding dresses. W.W. Bridal Boutique owner Victoria Miller told *The Press Enterprise* of Bloomsburg that "providing those two girls dresses for a sanctified marriage would break God's law." The women tried to schedule an appointment but were turned down.

Aug. 11 Bloomsburg Town Council discussed the incident at a City Council at an overflow meeting with about 70 attendees stretching out into a hallway. Without setting a deadline for action, the governing body said they are considering a possible ordinance that would prohibit businesses from discriminating against customers based on their sexual orientation or gender identity. Marriage is legal is Pennsylvania but the state does not have a statewide non-discrimination law making the couple's refusal of services by the boutique owner legal. Thirty-three municipalities in the state have adopted a local non-discrimination ordinance inclusive of gender identity and sexual orientation. House and Senate Bills 300 would create a statewide law banning LGBT discrimination but no action is expected soon on the twin measures.

# 1 in 5 Are LGBTQ Youth

The L.A. LGBT Center has long suspected that LGBTQ youth may be overrepresented in the Los Angeles County foster care system, the largest in the nation. But for years the only evidence to support that contention was anecdotal—the huge percentage of homeless youth with no skills or resources who show up seeking food, shelter and other services after they "age out" of the system at 18.

Thanks to a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the Center now has scientific data and analysis to show that LGBTQ youth are a major population within the foster care system and therefore a significant demographic to be explicitly included in any reform of the L.A. County Department of Children and Family Services.

Recently, the center announced key results from the Los Angeles Foster Youth Survey (LAFYS), the first study of LGBTQ foster youth in the nation, conducted by scholars at UCLA's Williams Institute, that specifically asks how many LGBTQ youth are there in the system, how did they get there and how are they doing? The study—"Sexual and Gender Minority Youth in Los Angeles County Foster Care: Assessing Disproportionately and Disparities"—reveals that of the approximately 7,400 youth ages 12-21 in the system in any given month, 19.1% or roughly 1,400 identity as LGBTQ. Of that 19.1%, 13.4% identify as LGB or questioning while 5.6% identify as transgender.

"This means," says the report," that there are between 1.5 to 2 times as many LGBTQ youth living in foster care as LGBTQ youth estimated to be living outside foster care."

"Historically, many of the LGBTQ youth who turn to us for a safe place to live have aged out of the foster system, don't have the skills or resources to make it on their own, and would otherwise be homeless," says Lorri L. Jean, CEO of the Center. "So this study supports our long-held belief that LGBTQ youth are not only overrepresented in the foster system but extremely disadvantaged within that system."

The LAFYS was funded as part of the historic $13.3 million, five-year federal grant the Center received in 2010 as part of the federal Permanency Innovations Initiative (PII). It was co-authored by the Center and scholars at UCLA's Williams Institute and Holarchy Consulting who conducted a telephone interview survey with 786 randomly sampled youth ages 12-21 living in the LA foster care system.

One key finding of the LAFYS study was that the majority of LGBTQ foster youth—86%—are children of color and about 10% report being born outside the U.S.

Discrimination is rampant. Nearly 13% of LGBTQ youth "report being treated poorly by the foster care system compared to 5.8% of non-LGBT youth," the report says.

Additionally, "18.5% of all youth reported having experienced some form of discrimination based on people's perceptions of their LGBT status or their expression of masculinity or femininity. Among LGBTQ youth, 37% reported poor treatment connected with their gender expression, sexual minority status or transgender status."

These statistics paint a portrait of hell for LGBTQ youth in foster care. LGBTQ youth are twice as likely to report that the system treated them "not very well," which the report shows is compounded by cultural incompetency—which is itself a barrier to these children finding a permanent home.

"This finding supports anecdotal accounts of prejudice in the child welfare system such as deeming LGBTQ youth 'unadoptable' or blaming their being 'out" for the harassment and abuse from others," the report says.

The high number of placements is considered "a risk factor to not obtaining permanency and to wellbeing in general."

Additionally, mental health and emotional distress also present barriers to permanency if caregivers can't deal with the issues. The study found that 13.5% of LGBTQ youth were hospitalized for emotional reasons, nearly triple the percentage of similar hospitalizations for non-LGBTQ youth (4.2%), but physical reasons for hospitalization were reported less often.

The report is also "consistent with previous evidence that LGBTQ youth leave their homes at nearly double the rate of non-LGBTQ youth (Cochran, 2002) and may choose to spend time on the streets because they felt safer there than in their group or foster home (Feinstein, et al. 2001)."

"We found LGBTQ youth in foster care share many similarities in experiences with non-LGBTQ youth, including racial disparities, yet also face unique systemic barriers to placement in permanent homes, such as being placed in group homes and experiencing homelessness at higher rates" said Principal Investigator, Bianca D.M. Wilson, Senior Scholar of Public Policy at UCLA's Williams Institute.

**37% of children in L.A. foster care reported poor treatment connected with their gender expression, sexual minority status or transgender status**

# Ralliers Call for Restoring LGBT Protections

More than 300 people took part in a rally Sept. 25 in Philadelphia's LOVE Park to show their support for restoring protections for LGBT people in Pennsylvania's hate-crime law. State Rep. Brian Sims, D-Phila., organized the rally in response to the recent attack on two gay men in his legislative district.

Sims said, "There are some in Harrisburg who object to restoring sexual orientation and gender identity protections to the hate-crime law. But they haven't been calling for repeal of the law's remaining protections, for victims targeted because of their race, color, religion or national origin -- they know they would take a political hit for that. Unfortunately, they think there's no political penalty or constituent outrage to face for leaving out women, LGBT people, or people targeted because of their ancestry or mental or physical disability. Pennsylvanians who don't like this injustice need to let their state representative and senator know now."

*State Rep. Brian Sims, D-Phila., organized the rally.* Photo by GALAEI

Sims is co-sponsoring bipartisan legislation (H.B. 177/S.B. 42) that would restore the protections the state Supreme Court struck down on a technicality in 2008.

Caryn Kunkle, friend of and spokesperson for the men assaulted Sept. 11 in Philadelphia, said, "I am thankful that many legislators are working to restore Pennsylvania's inclusive hate crime law. This is important to me not only because of my gay friends who were brutally attacked, but also because I have struggled my entire life to protect my autistic younger brother. It is never OK to hurt someone because of WHO they are."

State Rep. Cherelle Parker, D-Phila., chairwoman of the House Philadelphia Delegation, said, "It was Dr. King who stated, 'whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly,' and all acts of violence in Philadelphia directly and indirectly impact our city's 1.5 million residents and the more than 12 million residents of our Commonwealth. Every citizen, regardless of their ethnic background, religious affiliation, sexual orientation or gender identity has the right to feel safe in this city and state. We can no longer excuse nor ignore the behavior of violence in our communities or discriminatory targeting of any Pennsylvanian. Crimes against our friends, family and neighbors of the LGBT community solely committed because of a hatred for a natural difference must be deemed what they truly are -- a hate crime. Our General Assembly must set an example and take the necessary actions to properly protect each and every one of our constituents."

State Sen. Larry Farnese, D-Phila., said, "It is utterly disappointing to think that in 2014 we have to have press conferences and rallies to talk about the need for more equality under the law and tolerance in our neighborhoods. My deepest hope is that the tragic attack that took place blocks from where we are standing – a place called LOVE Park – will be a catalyst for real change in our communities because true equality can only be achieved if everyone is treated equally, regardless of who they are and who they choose to love, under the law."

Philadelphia District Attorney Seth Williams said, "The protections for sexual orientation need to be put back into the Ethnic Intimidation law. This is an important and fundamental issue that should be acted upon as soon as possible."

Philadelphia Councilman Jim Kenney said, "True equality will never be achieved through government action alone. Transphobia and homophobia have always been deeply embedded in American culture. As we were brutally reminded two weeks ago, our children are growing up in a country where LGBTQ people are still seen as an 'other' and somehow different from themselves – victories will remain hollow until this changes."

Ted Martin, executive director of Equality Pennsylvania, said, "While I am saddened and disturbed by the incident that brings us here today, I am truly heartened by the groundswell of support here in Philadelphia and around the commonwealth for LGBT equality. I hope that the leadership of both houses of the legislature see that LGBT equality is an issue that moves people -- and understand that it's time for them to finally move toward full equality for all LGBT people in Pennsylvania."

Elicia Gonzalez, executive director of GALAEI, an LGBT Latino social justice organization, said, "The outpouring of both outrage and support surrounding this heinous act has been nothing short of heart-warming. The fact that this issue moved hate crimes legislation into the foreground must not be taken lightly. We must also bring to light the other hate crimes that have gone unpunished, and sometimes, unnoticed. Let us use this momentum to continue to seek justice for Nizah Morris, Kyra Cordova, and Diamond Williams."

Sims hosted and co-chaired a public hearing of the state House Democratic Policy Committee Oct. 2 in Philadelphia's Kimmel Center on the issue of LGBT hate crimes.

*Sims represents the 182nd Legislative District.*

## legal column

*By Leo L. Dunn, Attorney at Law*

### What Is/Is Not a Hate Crime in PA?

Hate crime is a hot topic in Pennsylvania right now given the recent assault in Philadelphia of a gay couple by a group of twenty-somethings at Rittenhouse Square.

It's important to note that 'hate crime' is not a legal term. It is a common name for the crime of 'ethnic intimidation,' especially when the intimidation is not due to race or ethnicity.

Currently the offense of ethnic intimidation is defined in Section 2710(a) and (c) of Title 18 of the Pennsylvania Consolidated Statutes (the Crimes Code) and adds a secondary charge when a person commits another offense with malicious intent because of race, color, religion or national origin.

Note it currently only covers four categories. If the malicious intent is not due to one of the four, it is not a hate crime under current Pennsylvania law. For a short time prior to 2007, this law was extended to cover ancestry, mental and physical disability, sexual orientation, gender or gender identity. It was declared unconstitutional based on the manner in which the law was passed. It was added to a horse racing bill, which morphed into a casino bill and thus violated the single subject rule.

Currently a new effort to reinstate the prior language is underway. The current bills under consideration would extend the coverage to the already mentioned categories and make it clear the malicious intent could due to actual or perceived inclusion in any of the categories.

An argument exists that the offense of ethnic intimidation is not needed. It is based on the fact that in every case an underlying offense such as assault, theft or vandalism has to have taken place. Thus, why charge another crime when the person can already be convicted of the basic offense?

In reality, ethnic intimidation acts as an aggravating factor and upgrades the punishment for the crime. It also serves as a bargaining chip for the district attorney allowing him/her as a plea agreement is negotiated.

Draw your own conclusions, but be aware of what the crimes code does and does not cover in regards to protecting the GLBT community.

*Leo Dunn is an attorney and counselor-at-law practicing in the Harrisburg area with a focus on the estate planning needs of the GLBT community. He may be reached at leo@leodunnlaw.com.*

## LGBT community center coalition

*By Louie Marven, Executive Director*
*LGBT Community Center Coalition of Central PA*

### Wearing Our Billboards

On September 23, I attended a press conference in the Capitol rotunda on LGBT-inclusive hate crimes legislation. I was there with Pat Van Horn, the center's operations manager, and Shaashawn Dial-Snowden, member of the board of directors. We had a great time hearing from political and community leaders about the pressing need to add sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression to protected classes in Pennsylvania's existing hate crimes legislation.

A newsworthy moment from the press conference took place when PA State Senator Jim Ferlo of Pittsburgh came out as gay. In his inspiring speech, he said: "Hundreds of people know I'm gay. I just never made an official declaration. I never felt I had to wear a billboard on my forehead. But I'm gay. Get over it. I love it. It's a great life."

It was a lovely moment in so many ways. The act of coming out and living as an openly LGBT person in the face of violence-like the Philadelphia gay-bashing case that spurred the energy around this press conference-is radical and works toward educating our communities that we deserve basic respect and legal protections. We all know that having openly LGBT political leaders helps us to have a voice at the legislative table, and we can recognize that we haven't had always had this opportunity.

Congratulations to Senator Ferlo, and thank you for being a leading voice on the effort to extend hate crimes legislation to include LGBT people.

I also want to extend an even bigger thank you to everyone who has been metaphorically wearing a billboard on their foreheads.

Because of you billboard-wearers, there is an LGBT community ready to accept people into its arms when they decide that it is their time to come out.

Because of you billboard-wearers, our neighbors are more educated than ever on LGBT people and our concerns.

Because of you billboard-wearers, there is an increasing sense that sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression are natural components of human diversity.

There is a lot more work to do in making our communities safer and more inclusive of LGBT people. Billboard-wearers will continue to lead the efforts toward these goals.

I know that Senator Ferlo only meant well in his announcement. I also believe that it is useful to challenge the subtle yet harmful messages that creep into our coming out narratives that there is anything wrong with being obviously and unapologetically ourselves.

*The mission of the LGBT Center of Central PA is to create common ground for the LGBT community and allies in central Pennsylvania.*

# Advocacy Explodes

## *After Philadelphia Couple Attacked*

*By Central Voice*

In the immediate aftermath of the Sept. 11 beating of a gay couple in Philadelphia's 'gayborhood," all hands were on deck to man the ship of advocacy.

Legislators renewed calls for an LGBT-inclusive Hate Crime bill. Dismayed at the alleged violence, State Sen. Jim Ferlo, D-Allegheny County, came out publically at a press conference. Public hearings were held by State Rep. Brain Sims, who represents the neighborhood where the attack took place.

Anonymous online sleuths used social media to identify alleged suspects in the beating. One week after the incident, three suburban Philadelphia defendants surrendered to police and were charged in what one defense lawyer called merely a "fist fight that got out of hand."

The couple reported to police that they were allegedly attacked and robbed after being asked if they were couple. Both sustained serious injuries. One man suffered serious facial injuries, including an orbital fracture, and had his jaw wired.

Police said 24-year-old Philip Williams of Warminster; 24-year-old Kathryn Knott of Southampton, the daughter of a suburban police chief; and 26-year-old Kevin Harrigan of Warrington turned themselves in Sept. 24 and were charged with criminal conspiracy and two counts each of aggravated and simple assault, and reckless endangerment.

**Pennsylvania's hate-crimes law does not cover crimes motivated by a person's sexual orientation.**

The victims told police a group hurled gay slurs and beat them when the two parties passed on a Philadelphia street Sept. 11. Williams' attorney, Fortunato Perri Jr., said the suspects were celebrating a friend's birthday at a city restaurant prior to the encounter. He said the case did not involve anyone's sexual orientation, but was instead a "mutual confrontation" in which his client "was not the aggressor."

"In no way, shape or form was this incident related to anyone's sexual orientation," Perri said outside the police station after his surrendered. "This was a mutual confrontation that started because two individuals got into an argument out in the street."

*Philly.com* later reported homophobic comments on Knott's social media accounts. Williams, Knott, and Harrigan are due in court Dec. 16 for a preliminary hearing.

**Hate law**

The incident brought into sharp relief the fact that Pennsylvania's hate-crimes law does not cover crimes motivated by a person's sexual orientation. Even so, Philadelphia District Attorney Seth Williams said that "an assault on people because of their sexual orientation has no place in Philadelphia." Openly gay state Rep. Brian Sims of Philadelphia, who represents the district in which the alleged attack took place, has said the case demonstrates the need for the law to change.

Within days of the incident, a group of Democratic lawmakers demanded passage of a law to provide hate-crime protections to LGBT citizens. "We will no longer tolerate crimes that are committed because of someone's sexual orientation, gender identity or gender expression. We have had it," said Rep. Dan Frankel, D-Allegheny, a co-chair of the legislature's Equality Caucus.

Frankel and 20 other lawmakers and supporters gathered in the state Capitol Rotunda Sept. 23 and called for action on House Bill 177 or Senate Bill 42. Those bills would expand the criminal offense of ethnic intimation to LGBT citizens. Currently, that protection extends only to individuals based on race, color, religion or national origin.

The bills have not moved out of their respective chamber's judiciary committee since they were introduced in January 2013. Passage of the legislation would subject individuals involved in that kind of attack to stiffer penalties, and it has the support of the Pennsylvania District Attorneys Association. But Senate Judiciary Committee Chairman Stewart Greenleaf, R-Montgomery County, said on Tuesday he has no intention of moving the legislation out of his committee. He said it is unnecessary and could interfere with someone's freedom of speech.

Greenleaf was among the lawmakers who voted in 2002 for a law that provided that protection against intimidation based on an individual's sexual orientation despite fears raised at the time by some that it could be used to inhibit free-speech rights. Greenleaf said proponents of the legislation assured him at the time that would not be the case.

Six months later, then-Philadelphia District Attorney Lynne Abraham brought hate crime charges against Christian protestors at a gay rights event, Greenleaf said. As a result, he said, "I don' t think there's a need for it because there's also all kinds of laws covering this. People who conduct themselves that way and assault other people, aggravated assaults or any other way, they are going to be get punished. There is significant legislation that covers that kind of activity and they face very severe penalties and they should. That's my position."

**Hearings**

Oct. 2, Rep. Sims co-chaired a public hearing of the House Democratic Policy Committee in Philadelphia on the issue of anti-LGBT hate crimes. The attack took place in his district. Among others, the city's DA Seth Williams and Caryn Kunkle, friend of and spokesperson for victims, spoke before the committee.

"Our hate-crime law is leaving out women, LGBT people, and people targeted because of their ancestry or mental or physical disability. We must correct this injustice and deter hate crimes, which can have the effect of intimidating an entire segment of the community," Sims said.

Policy Committee Chairman Mike Sturla, D-Lancaster, said, "Every Pennsylvanian deserves to be treated with the same dignity and respect."

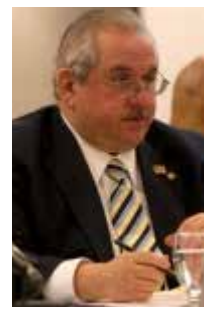
**Moving out**

At the Sept. 23 news conference, Sen. Jim Ferlo, D-Allegheny County, who publicly declared at that event that he was gay, said he believes many incidents of intimidation related to sexual orientation or perception go unreported. But if it were a crime, he said the assailant "may have thought twice if they knew the penalties were harsher."

Ferlo told *BuzzFeed*'s Tony Merevick "The focus of the press conference was the horrendous act of hate against a gay couple in Philly, but I paused and made a personal statement that I think is germane to the topic. I didn't plan and I didn't prepare it, but I thought it was an appropriate time to speak about the issue and share my experience."

As an 'out' member of the General Assembly, Ferlo joins State Rep. Sims, who ran as an openly-gay candidate and who took office in January 2013, and State Rep. Mike Fleck (R-Altoona) who came out as gay in December 2012.

In making his personal announcement, Ferlo asked those assembled to allow him a "personal comment." He paused. "...I am gay," said Ferlo. "Hundreds of people know I'm gay, I just never made it an official declaration. I never felt I had to wear a billboard on my forehead. But I'm gay. Get over it. I love it. It's a great life."



*PA Sen. Jim Ferlo*

On Nov. 12, 2013, Ferlo announced he would not seek re-election in 2014, citing changes to his district under the then-recent legislative redistricting plan. "It's not politics; (it's) no grand conspiracy by friend or foe," he said on the Senate floor, where he called redistricting a commonplace process in state government and dubbed himself an "in-your-face advocate" for change. The 38th District that Ferlo has represented since 2002 took on new contours under legislative redistricting and will include the northern portion of Allegheny County. Most of it will cover an area in the more Republican-leaning 40th District, represented by Sen. Randy Vulakovich, R-Shaler.

# LVC Hosts World Premiere of "The Matter of Frank Schaefer"

Lebanon Valley College will host the world premiere of "The Matter of Frank Schaefer," an original play produced by the Philadelphia-based Curio Theatre Company, Sat., Nov. 8, 7 p.m. in Miller Chapel.

The play is especially important because the Methodist church's highest court, the Judicial Court, decided last month to make a review Schaefer's case following an up and down appeals process. Schaefer was defrocked following a church trial last year, then re-instated by an appeals panel in June. That decision was appealed to the high council. Schaefer officiated his gay son's wedding can keep his pastoral credentials.

The issue of gay marriage has long roiled the United Methodist Church, the nation's second-largest Protestant denomination. Hundreds of Methodist ministers have publicly rejected church policies that allow gay members but ban "self-avowed practicing homosexuals" from becoming clergy and forbid ministers from performing same-sex marriages.

Traditionalists say clergy have no right to break church law just because they disagree with it. Some conservative pastors are calling for a breakup of the denomination, which has 12 million members worldwide, saying the split over gay marriage is irreconcilable.

The church suspended Schaefer, former pastor of a church in Lebanon, for officiating his son's 2007 wedding, then defrocked him when he refused to promise to uphold the Methodist law book "in its entirety." Schaefer successfully appealed, arguing the decision was wrong because it was based on an assumption he would break church law in the future.

The Rev. Christopher Fisher, who served as the church's prosecutor at Schaefer's trial, then appealed to the high court.

The Judicial Council has the final word on the matter. No decision is expected until several days after the council adjourns on Oct. 25.

Schaefer has since launched a student ministry in Isla Vista, California.This full-length live theatrical performance follows the journey of Lebanon County pastor Rev. Frank Schaefer from April 28, 2007—when he performs the marriage of his son to another man—through the 2013 trial in which the church finds him guilty of disobedience and removes him from service. In the course of his dynamic and influential response to the trial, Schaefer challenges the Church "to stop treating gays as second-class Christians." The play is an inspirational tale for the faithful and disbeliever alike.

Philadelphia-based playwrights Paul Kuhn and Tim Martin interviewed Rev. Schaefer multiple times as well as hundreds of people associated with the story. They went to his preaching events, and studied interviews he gave on shows like The View and Anderson Cooper 360. Additional playwrights were hired to help refine the script, as well as six actors whose rehearsal time helped to develop the final production.

"Because they wanted to open the production in Frank's own community—the community most impacted by the story—staff at Curio Theatre Company contacted us at Miller Chapel," said Paul Fullmer, chaplain at Lebanon Valley College. "With seats for almost a thousand people, we're hoping to welcome many from throughout the county and beyond to the college for this special event." Rev. Schaefer, who is also supportive of this production, has indicated that he will return to Pennsylvania to attend the premiere.

Tickets are $15 each. Advance orders for groups of 10 people or more are $10 per person and church youth group tickets are $10 per student. On-line ticket purchase available through Eventbrite at www.eventbrite.com. Admission to the shows is free to LVC students with their college ID.

For more information or to order tickets, contact LVC's Office of Spiritual Life at 717-867-6135 or email Natalia Smith at nsmith@lvc.edu. More events sponsored by the Office of Spiritual Life are listed at http://www.lvc.edu/spiritual-life/concerts-events.aspx. For more information about the Curio Theatre Company, visit www.curiotheatre.org.

## WARE CENTER
**Lancaster**
**Nov. 5, 7:30 pm**

Award-winning actor, director and playwright, Frank Ferrante recreates his PBS, New York and London acclaimed portrayal of legendary comedian Groucho Marx. In this fast-paced show, the comic genius of stage and screen will deliver some of his most memorable one-liners, anecdotes, and songs. (717) 871-7018; warecenterinfo@millersville.edu

## HERSHEY THEATRE
**Straight No Chaser**
**Dec. 6, 3 & 8 PM**

If the phrase "male a cappella group" conjures up an image of students in blue blazers, ties, and khakis singing traditional college songs on ivied campuses... think again. Straight No Chaser(SNC) are neither strait-laced nor straight-faced, but neither are they vaudeville-style kitsch. They will bring their "Happy Hour Tour" to Hershey. They have emerged as a phenomenon with a massive fanbase, numerous national TV appearances and proven success with CD releases. The "Happy Hour Tour" comes on the heels of the release of Under The Influence, their fourth album release through Atlantic Records. The album features contributions from superstars Jason Mraz, Rob Thomas, Phil Collins, Dolly Parton and more! 1-800-745-3000, HersheyTheatre.com

## OPEN STAGE OF HARRISBURG
**Nov. 28-Dec. 14**

BILL W. and Dr. BOB

In 1929, famous New York stockbroker Bill Wilson crashes with the stock market and becomes a hopeless drunk. Dr. Bob Smith, a surgeon from Ohio, has also been an alcoholic for thirty years, often going into the operating room with a hangover. Through an astonishing series of events, Bill W. and Dr. Bob meet and form a relationship, each helping to keep the other sober. This is the amazing and often humorous story of the two men who pioneered Alcoholics Anonymous, as well as the story of their wives, who founded Al Anon 717-232-OPEN (6736)

## WHITAKER CENTER
**Harrisburg**
**Nov. 26, 7:30 p.m.**

Hailed for their flawless execution, New York-based band The Machine is America's premier Pink Floyd tribute band. Their performances showcase Pink Floyd's enormous legacy through a multi-dimensional approach. The band's impeccable recreation of Floyd tunes and their own reinterpretation of hypnotic jams, provide audiences with an unforgettable experience. 717-214-ARTS (2787)

## STRAND CAPITAL
**White Christmas**
**Dec. 19, 20, 21**

Bing Crosby and Danny Kaye play war buddies turned entertainers who fall for a pair of sisters (Rosemary Clooney and Vera Ellen). The boys follow the girls to a resort, which is owned by their former commanding officer, and he's in danger of losing the place. What better reason to stage a show than to keep the resort out of hock? www.mystrandcapitol.org

## MAJESTIC THEATRE
**Gettysburg College**
**Nov. 1, 8 p.m.**

America's most popular comedienne! Returning to the Majestic, Paula Poundstone is a regular on NPR's weekly news quiz Wait, Wait...Don't Tell Me. Expect the unexpected when this veteran entertainer (mother and author) shares her clean comedy and laugh-out-loud insights on everyday life. Info: 717-337-8200; boxofficeinfo@gettysburg.edu

## GREENBELT EVENTS
**Abbey Bar**
**Appalachian Brewing Company**
**Dec. 19, Doors at 8p.m., Show at 9 p.m.**

The Brooklyn-based funk army known as Turkuaz "is like tossing a lit match into a dumpster full of fireworks" (bestnewbands.com). After multiple residencies at NYC's Brooklyn Bowl, two blowout performances at Bear Creek Music Festival, and tours spanning the east and west coasts, Turkuaz has developed a reputation from NYC to San Francisco as the band that plays louder, faster, and harder than all the rest.

## SHARADIN BIGLER THEATRE
**Ephrata Performing Arts Center**
**Dec. 4-20**

Annie

Even when things seem tough, better times are just around the corner in this beloved family musical set during the Christmas season. Your kids are sure to love Annie, the feisty orphan girl who escapes the orphanage run by the comically frustrated Miss Hannigan. When the seemingly gruff billionaire Oliver Warbucks decides to adopt Annie, Miss Hannigan plots to thwart Annie's good fortune, but you just know that a happy ending is in store, especially when FDR also gets involved. (717) 733-7966; epacboxoffice@gmail.com

*Lawrence von Barann*

# Art + Gay + Local History

*By Central Voice*

If you want to know about the region's art history, ask Lawrence von Barann.

A retrospective of his work - ART/history: A Retrospective Exhibit on the Career of Lawrence von Barann - recently hung at the LGBT Center Gallery in Harrisburg. The gallery showcased 15 works of art created by the 86 year old artist from 1947 through 2014.

"The selection process was difficult," von Barann told *Central Voice*, noting that his work covers a lot of artistic territory.

The show was a collaborative effort.

"This is a very special collaboration between the LGBT Center Gallery and the LGBT Center's History Project," according to Barry Loveland who chairs the History Project and is serving as a guest co-curator of the exhibit.

"We not only have 15 wonderful works of art from virtually every decade of the 70 year career of Mr. von Barann, but we have an exhibit of memorabilia of his life and we will be showing video clips of his oral history interview. We have more than two hours of video with all sorts of amazing stories about his life and it has been difficult choosing just a few to feature at the opening reception," Loveland said.

On Sept. 25, 45 people gathered at the center to hear Von Barann tell stories about his New York City years and initially deciding to move to Harrisburg. "No one tells a story like Larry," commented local history expert David Morrison, executive director of the Historic Harrisburg Association.

Lawrence (Larry) von Barann was born in 1928 in New York City. An artist, art teacher and wood engraver, Larry began his art studies at The Brooklyn Museum Art School and The Art Students League in New York City. While supporting himself financially as a commercial wood engraver, he distinguished himself as a surrealist artist with showings at many of the museums and art galleries throughout New York City over the next 20 years. Exhibitions included The Brooklyn Museum, The Library of Congress, Ball State Teachers College, Oakland (CA) Art Museum, New York's Museum of Modern Art, The Weyhe Gallery and many more.

His arrival in Harrisburg in the early 1970's allowed central PA residents to appreciate his work through showings at The State Museum of Pennsylvania, Gallery Doshi, Millersville University, Lebanon Valley College and Harrisburg Area Community College (HACC) to name only a few. The area also gave him his first teaching job as an art instructor at HACC where he not only taught for 13 years but also developed new class curriculums that are still taught there today. His work is collected by art collectors across the US and is also a part of the permanent collections of The State Museum of Pennsylvania, Millersville University and Lebanon Valley College.

At age 86, he is finally letting us take a moment in time to reflect on his career as an artist. It is a career spanning seven decades. Starting as a high school student in New York City, Larry became interested in art. Soon that interest would become a life-long passion, visiting art museums and galleries, and studying, teaching and creating art. He constantly seeks out opportunities to learn new techniques and media and apply them to his work. The works in this exhibit show some of that range, and one of the works features an experimental acrylic media. Larry loves going to art museums and exhibitions to learn and be inspired by the works of the modern masters – even meeting a couple of them along the way. The works of art in the exhibit reflect a wide variety of interests that Larry has pursued in his life.

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book reviews

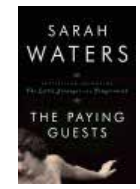
*By Deborah Battisti & Lori Lane*
*Dauphin County Library System*
*www.dcls.org*

# Great Lesbian Fiction

The four titles below are just some of the great lesbian fiction you'll find at the Dauphin County Library System. Visit dcls.org or stop by any location to get a library card, so you can check out these and other good books. We've got music and DVDS, too.

***When She Was Good: Best Lesbian Erotica.*** **Edited by Tristan Taormino**
Let these tales seduce you with their promises of words whispered against bare flesh, of breathless sex in the summer darkness, of red wine and rain, romance and rebirth.

***Women with Handcuffs: Lesbian Cop Erotica.*** **Edited by Sacchi Green**
What is it about lesbian cops that push all the right buttons? If you like your policewomen on the case and under the sheets, the hotly subversive stories in this book are for you.




***The Paying Guests*** **by Sarah Waters**
A love story, a character study and a gripping psychological narrative – when Frances Wray falls in love with married Lilian Barber, their passion disrupts lives in multiple and increasingly complex ways. Sarah Waters scores another hit with this beautifully written story.

***Blue is the Warmest Color*** **by Julie Maroh**
This tender and passionate tale of a teenager surprised by her love for an older girl was a recent film (also available at the library). The graphic novel is a great way to experience this tale of adolescent identity seeking and the erotic abandon of youth.

## Harrisburg Gay Men's Chorus Program

Harrisburg Gay Men's Chorus presents "Lessons from Carols" Sun., Dec. 7, 4 p.m. at the Unitarian Church of Harrisburg, 1280 Clover Lane, Harrisburg, and again on Sun., Dec. 14 at 4 p.m. at the Unity Church of Harrisburg, 927 Wertzville Road, Enola.

The chorus' interpretation of the English holiday tradition of Lessons and Carols promises to be a unique and highly entertaining holiday event. Join the boys as they sing songs and deliver lessons written, performed or composed by famous "Carols" including Channing, Burnett, King, Brady, and many others. From the divine to the hilarious, this program promises to deliver an evening of reflection, laughs and, as always, high-quality singing.

The chorus celebrates the LGBT experience in song and performance, fosters a greater appreciation of the male choral musical tradition, nurtures members in their artistic and personal growth, and enriches the region through entertainment and positive interaction.

*Info: info@harrisburgmenschorus.org*

## *Poetry:* After Lunch with Frank O'Hara

Inspired by poet Frank O'Hara's Lunch Poems, Craig Cotter's fourth collection of poetry, After Lunch with Frank O'Hara, assembles 51 poems, each as out, unapologetic, and inventive as those of the late poet's. This collection also features an introduction by author Felice Picano, who knew O'Hara when both writers lived in Greenwich Village, and an afterword by Cotter about his quest to learn more about O'Hara's life and art. The book is published by Chelsea Station Editions, 112 pages.

Craig Cotter was born in 1960 in New York and has lived in California since 1986. He is the author of three collections of poetry, including Chopstix Numbers. After Lunch with Frank O'Hara, with van Introduction by Felice Picano, was a finalist for the National Poetry Series. Poems from After Lunch with Frank O'Hara have appeared in Global Tapestry Review, poems-for-all, Poetry New Zealand, Assaracus, Court Green, Eleven Eleven, Euphony, The Antigonish Review and Caliban Online. Fifteen of his poems were nominated for Pushcart Prizes from 2009 to 2013. He is online at www.craigcotter.com.

*Pastel by Alice Kelsey*

# Diverse Media and Holiday Exhibit

Oil paintings by Chris Cox of LaFayette Hill and Paul Flury of Elizabethtown, pastels by Alice Kelsey of Warriors Mark, thread paintings by Teri Oja of Enola, and photographs by Phillip Windell of Harrisburg are on view until Nov. 26 at the Art Association of Hbg.

*CHRIS COX, an abstract artist, explains that she is "informed and inspired by the aging stone in structures such as walls, buildings, bridges and other eroding objects that I have seen in France, Italy and Spain."*

*PAUL FLURY, plein air artist, avers that his love of the Susquehanna River Valley began when he was a young lad living in Middletown, along the River itself. As a boy, Flury studied the different moods of the water and the surrounding landscapes, and as an adult painter, he wants to convey that same mood of quiet contemplation and mysterious beauty.*

*ALICE KELSEY, who has always lived in rural areas, feels a deep connection to the forms and forces within the landscape. Working primarily in oil or pastel, Kelsey strives to convey the atmosphere of a particular time and place, and is especially inspired by the ever-changing nuances of light and color in the landscape.*

*TERI OJA works in a unique medium, creating vibrant "paintings" with fabric and thread rather than paint and canvas. Oja began working with fabric and thread at age five, and in more recent years has combined her training in drawing and painting with her needle-work to create "thread paintings." She paints the background fabric and then overlays it with freeform embroidery, sometimes enhancing it with beading or quilting.*

*PHILLIP WINDELL has been capturing images photographically for nearly forty years, beginning with his time in West Africa with the Peace Corps. Largely self-taught, Windell has received guidance and inspiration from many sources, paying particular attention to the great street photographers such as Atget, Brassai and Brandt. Windell has also been strongly influenced by the boisterous creativity of the revolutionary paintings of the early 20th century.*

**Holiday exhibit**

Oil paintings by Philip Colgan of Etters, Robert Hughes of Winfield, Mary Anne Lard of Carlisle, and Kristine Miller-Siple of Schuylkill Haven will be showcased in the exhibition debuting Dec. 5 and runs through Jan. 8.

*PHILIP COLGAN, who attended the York Academy of Art, continued his art education with extensive museum studies during his travels in Europe, concentrating on the traditional painting techniques of the Old Masters, as well as various American artists and illustrators of "The Golden Age."*

*ROBERT HUGHES enjoys creating oil paintings inspired by nature, with many of his landscapes done en plein air in one sitting. Hughes travels frequently to Cape Cod and Great Britain on painting expeditions, and indeed, the series to be shown at AAH was all done from his recent trips to England and Scotland. Hughes travels compactly, with his water-soluble oils, brushes, and gessoed Arches paper packed neatly in a specially-designed carrying box.*

*MARY ANN LARD paints vibrant still-lifes and landscapes, and has exhibited throughout the area. She holds her BFA in painting from Louisiana Tech University, and an associates degree from Harrisburg Area Community College in web development. She is also a freelance illustrator of children's books. Lard says that she is stimulated by colour, texture, design and mood, with her drawings and paintings the visual expression of the way she sees things.*

*KRIS MILLER-SIPLE taught art at all levels after graduating from Kutztown University with a BS Degree in Art Education. She has experimented with two-and-three-dimensional art forms and various media, but since discovering the luminescence of oil painting, Miller-Siple has been committed to the medium. Her emphasis on the play of light and colour in the shadow is a metaphor for "looking back in time."*

*Info: www.artassocofhbg.com; 717-236-1432.*


ART
ASSOCIATION OF HARRISBURG
presents

**5-ARTIST INVITATIONAL EXHIBITION**
Through November 26
*Featuring oils, pastels, photography, and thread paintings.*

**PSYCHIC GALLERY WITH WILLIAM STILLMAN**
Sunday, November 2 • 2-4 p.m.
*$25 in advance, $30 at door*

**WEDNESDAY CLUB CONCERT**
Sunday, November 16 • 3-5 p.m.
*$10 at door*

**"WIZARD OF OZ" PRESENTATION**
Sunday, November 30 • 2-4 p.m.
*By authors Wm. Stillman, Jay Scarfone. $10 at door.*

**OPENING RECEPTION FOR 4-ARTIST EXHIBITION**
Friday, December 5 • 5-8 p.m.
Exhibit runs through January 8.
*With oils, pastels. Music by Jonathan Frazier.*
*Book-signing for AAH History "As the Paint Dries" by Carrie Wissler-Thomas.*
*Exhibition runs through January 8.*

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# Onward Christian Soldiers

Apparently the Christian thing to do nowadays is run articles labeling gays as the 'Gaystapo' and opinion pieces claiming that Obama is plotting to murder 25 million Americans. For a while now, arch anti-gay spokesperson Matt Barber of Liberty University has run an online publication, *BarbWire*.

*BarbWire* supposedly gives news and opinion from a decidedly biblical worldview. The publication is viciously anti-gay, running articles and opinion pieces such as:

*Latest Examples of the Undeniable Link Between Homosexuality and Pedophilia*

*'Gay Marriage,' Distant Consequences: Homosexuality, Sexual Immorality and the Downfall of American Civilization*

*'GLBT' Schoolteachers Reveal Plans to Push Homosexuality*

*Matt Barber, Liberty University*


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**Celebrate the Christmas Season!**

**Dec. 14th - Christmas Cantata - 5pm**
**Dec. 24th - Christmas Eve Cookies & Caroling - 10pm Service - 11pm**

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*717.236.7387*
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*3rd Sunday at 7pm, Wednesdays at 7pm*
*www.mccofthespirit.org*


## MCC column

*By Rev. Lori Rivera, Pastor*
*MCC of the Spirit*

# Time Gets Away

Time seems to have a way of just disappearing. This came home to me a few weeks ago when one of my congregation members asked me how come my article wasn't in the September-October edition of Central Voice. I had to confess, "time got away from me. Before I knew it, I had missed the deadline and didn't get my article written in time." Oh boy!

As we move further into fall, time will feel even shorter. The days will grow shorter and the nights will seem longer. Holidays will seem to happen faster than we can prepare for them. The children are back at school and are already counting down the days until their winter holiday.

Stores had Halloween and Christmas decorations out in August and seasonal music blares from their speakers. We're already preparing for our annual Thanksgiving Day potluck at church and rehearsing music for our Christmas cantata as I write this in September.

It is "time" to reclaim time. Yes I know that is impossible. Once time is gone, it's gone. It's like people who say that they will catch up on their sleep. Can't get those lost hours back. But we can claim time.

Many of us have a common trait. We are busy people. Anyone looking at our appointment books, calendars, or phones would wonder if we ever stop. Maybe what we need to do is schedule an appointment for ourselves. Pick a day a week (doesn't have to be the same one each week), pick 30 minutes (some might need to start with 10 minutes) or an hour and schedule self time. Write it in your appointment book or put it in your phone. Keep your own appointment.

Maybe at your appointment you sleep. Maybe you read that magazine article that has been sitting on your coffee table for weeks. Maybe you spend time with a loved one. Maybe you just sit quietly and enjoy the weather with a cup of coffee or your favorite glass of wine. Whatever you do, may it bring you peace.

This experience is often referred to in the church as "Sabbath" time. A time set aside. In churches we usually practice this as a time of worship. It can be. But it is also a time to rest and relax. To move away from the chaos in our lives and just be. It is a time to be still.

I urge you in this busy time of holidays and shorter days, make an appointment for yourself. If you are in the habit or would like to try incorporating worship with your appointment, come worship with us at MCC of the Spirit on Sunday morning at 10 a.m.

# Hear Me Out

*By Chris Azzopardi*

• Melissa Etheridge, *This Is M.E.* **Grade: B-**

Since going indie, Melissa Etheridge must be feeling as free as when she first came out gay two decades ago. Throughout the punny, super-charged This Is M.E., the loose feels of liberation are ever-present as the lesbian icon gets her feet wet in foreign waters (2010's Fearless Love suggested experimental restlessness). But when you team up with Jerry "Wonda" Duplessis, producer of the Fugees, and RoccStar, who's laid down tracks for Usher and Chris Brown, you don't get straight-up rock 'n' roll; you get smatterings of R&B and soul. Considering this is the same scorned woman who bit into "Bring Me Some Water," a song like "A Little Hard Hearted," with its full-on sing-along pop hook, is initially jarring. A few listens later and you've got that thing on replay. Then there's the flirty, seemingly autobiographical "Take My Number," which rumbles with the rock-lite flair of her commercial '90s-era zenith. Come chorus, a catchy "drink / think" rhyme makes it so convincing, so irresistible, you won't be able to help yourself – you'd better take that number. With vexed kiss-off "Ain't That Bad" and the soaring Wonda-influenced "Monster," and even the raging "Stranger Road," Etheridge maintains her essence, but she's also wearing many different hats. They don't always fit – the rambling "Who Are You Waiting For" is Melissa's faltering attempt at a mushy power ballad – but sometimes finding the right one takes a few tries.

• Lee Ann Womack, *The Way I'm Livin'* **Grade: B**

Lee Ann Womack's mega-ballad "I Hope You Dance," your mom's favorite song, and the sleek crossover LP "Something Worth Leaving Behind" thrust her into the mainstream, but, at heart, Lee Ann Womack was always more of a country girl. Reveling in the traditional Southern sounds she'd eventually pursue, the Grammy winner's first album in seven years – a grower – is a roots-based disc centered on down-hominess, heartbreak and devil worship. Most reminiscent of her pop-country phase, "Same Kind of Different" imparts a ties-that-bind sentiment as its a cappella opening eases into a drum-driven, fiddle-strung ditty. "The Way I'm Livin'," the title track, leans closer to the deep Texan twang of ominous, snake-slitherin' badassery. "If I ever get to heaven, it's a doggone shame," Womack sings, sounding as fiery as the flames she's dancing in. "Don't Listen to the Wind" sends a simple guitar into a tornado of sonic madness. It's a satisfying adrenaline rush. Womack, who's even better at fragile laments, could dry out a drenched towel with piano tearjerker "Send It on Down," an inspiring ode to getting your shit together. Not every song on The Way I'm Livin' reaches that caliber of melody and poignancy, but the album's still like having a devil on your back. Some of it's just so hard to shake.

***ALSO OUT***

• Lady Gaga and Tony Bennett, *Cheek to Cheek*

After the dire non-success of Lady Gaga's ARTPOP, it was time for Mother Monster to take a step back. Arm in arm with Tony Bennett, she does just that on Cheek to Cheek, harkening back to the old-timey jazz classics of Cole Porter, Irving Berlin and Duke Ellington.

• Lucinda Williams, *Down Where the Spirit Meets the Bone*

In a singles-driven industry with less interest in the full-album format, it's ambitious of Lucinda Williams to release two of them at the same time. The alt-country icon's 11th outing, a music purist's dream, is a double-disc set steeped in Williams' signature line-blurring.

## LANCASTER EVENTS

**Whoopie Pie of the Month**
November 2014, Hershey Farm Restaurant & Inn, Hershey Farm- The Bakery

**Miesse Chocolate Factory Tour**
118 N. Water Street Lancaster, Contact: 717-392-6011
Good for family, kids. Reservations required. Groups welcome.

## YORK EVENTS

**YCHT- Colonial Complex**
157 W Market St, York, www.yorkheritage.org Phone: 717-848-1587
Includes Gates House, Plough Tavern, Bobb Log House & Colonial Court House

**Backroom Curiosities - National Watch & Clock Museum**
514 Poplar St, Columbia, Phone: 717-684-8261
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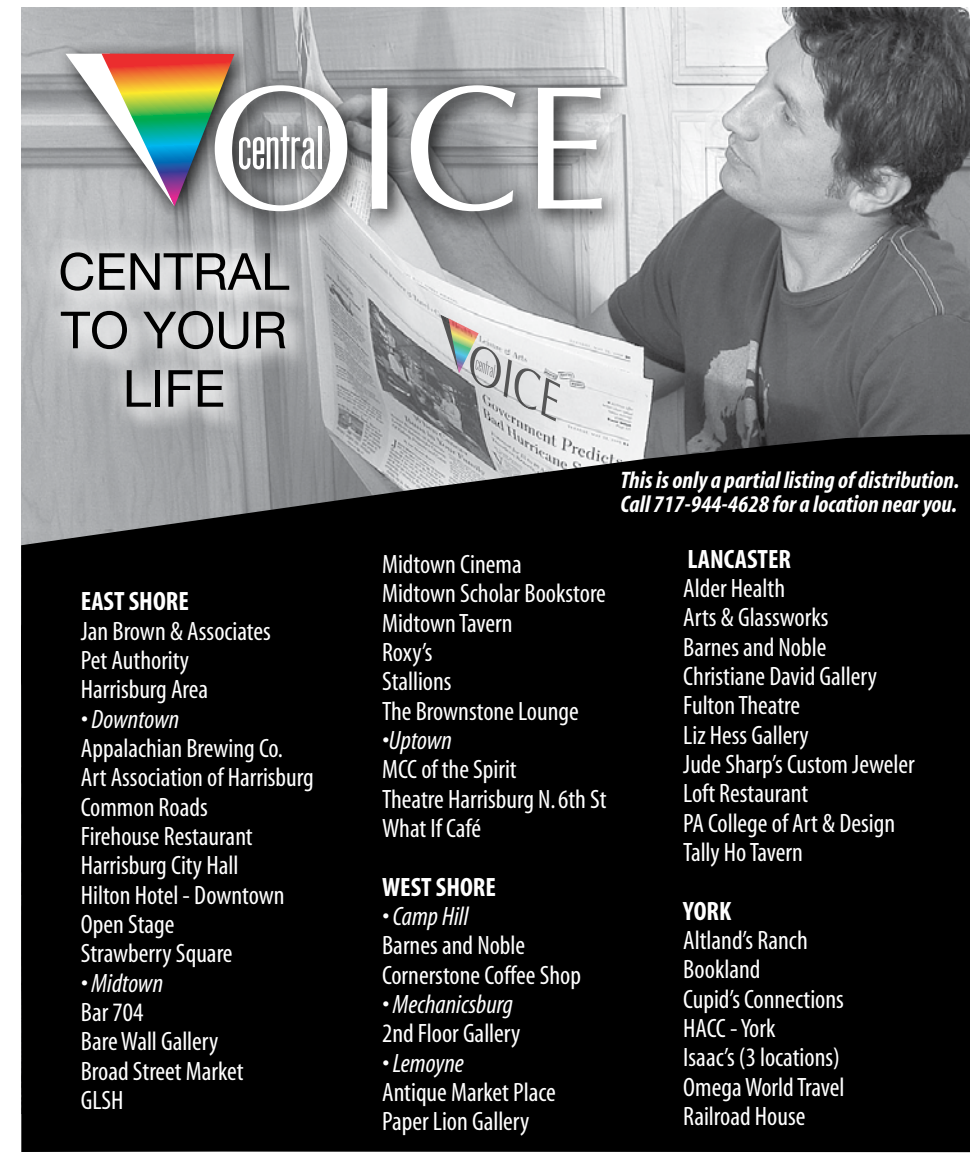

# Let's Talk: Is Race in Amercia Still a Problem?

*By Shaashawn Dial-Snowden*

One didn't have to look further than the hundreds of racially charged tweets during the debut of the TV show Black-ish in late September or the ongoing controversy over the shooting of unarmed Black teen Michael Brown to know we, as a country, are struggling with race.

One doesn't have to look beyond the debates on the Senate floor regarding immigration policies and procedures or the controversy over the exclusion of women of color by the NFL to tackle domestic violence; that the absence of people of color in board rooms and positions of power exist.

One doesn't have to look past the inaccurate and stereotype-filled article written by New York Times staffer Shonda Rimes on historic TGIT (Thank Goodness It's Thursday TV). Or the horrific reality that African-American transgender women have a 50% greater homicide rate than their white, Latina, and Native American counterparts to acknowledge that there is much work yet to be done to achieve a multicultural society that values all life equally and is in constant evolution toward BEING diverse instead of just LOOKING diverse.

In a time of sound bites, headlines, tweets, status updates, and texts, structured conversations about race, racism, power, privilege, and oppression remain undesirable and uncomfortable for many. I say structured because in a structured conversation there should be facilitators to ensure all voices and perspectives are heard and to ensure that one voice does not dominate the conversation.

In addition, structured conversations provide common definitions (often obtained from the United Nations) from which to explore areas like institutional racism and internalized racism. Or to ask does reverse racism exist? What are steps can I take today to make my spheres of influence safe spaces for all?

I spend a great deal of time using my gift and talents to educate on the "gay alphabet" LGBTQQ-IAAS-2 (lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, questioning, Intersex, ally, asexual, duel spirit.) However, rarely am I engaged in conversations where I share that I prefer to identify as SGL (same gender loving) versus the "L" because of the historic exclusion of women of color in various movements towards equality.

This is the same reason why I do not call myself a "feminist" and instead call myself a "womanist/womynist". Like the writer and director of the film, "The New Black," I too was conflicted on the day Sen. Barrack Obama became President Elect Barrack Obama. I was in tears and in awe that I was living to see the first African American President of the United States. As an African-American woman I was grateful to my ancestors for their sacrifices and thrilled for my parents who experienced segregation and used their voices during the civil rights movement to enact change. I was filled with gratitude to God who orchestrated this victory, filled with hope that a huge step toward multiculturalism had been taken and filled with inspiration to dream bigger and bolder for myself and loved ones. However, the same gender loving part of me was crushed with the passing of Proposition 8 in California the same evening. As if that wasn't enough conflict, media reports were airing sound bites that the "black church" was a huge part of the reason Proposition 8 successfully passed. I am pro-black, not anti-white, but how do I live with the fact that a huge part of "my people" don't like me and don't believe I am entitled to a basic human right; to marry the person I love?

**"I am pro-black, not anti-white, but how do I live with the fact that a huge part of 'my people' don't like me..."**

Instead of being paralyzed by the conflict, I decided to grow as an advocate and ask on a daily basis how do I/we create safe professional, spiritual, personal spaces of conscious racial reconciliation and elimination of heterosexism?

One way is to engage in structured conversations. The YWCA Greater Harrisburg and the LGBT Center of Central PA partnered to conduct the "Let's Talk: A Conversation about Race" program with a group of fourteen leaders in the LGBT community. The pilot "Let's Talk" series was launched earlier this year with business and civic leaders from across the Greater Harrisburg community, including LGBT Center executive director Louie Marven.

Following this successful inaugural series, the YWCA's goal was to "take this show on the road". This partnership solidified the YWCA's interest in and commitment to fostering an inclusive and just community. Amanda Arbour, Racial Justice Program Coordinator at the YWCA, co-facilitated the series with me.

Using a model successfully implemented across the nation, this series of six facilitated discussions was designed to help individuals "unpack" the ways that racism manifests itself at the personal, organizational and systemic levels. The goal is for participants to leave with tools for taking action to deconstruct racism in their respective spheres of influence.

Structured conversations are how we get a full picture – analyzing qualitative and quantitative data, how we exchange view points, how organizations assess their strengths, assess their weaknesses and transform into anti-racist cultures offering anti-racist programming and services. A good conversation makes you think long after the conversation ends. A good conversation can lead to connection. A good conversation can lead to an Oprah "ahh moment or the flame to ignite us to "do our healing work" in the words of Iyanla Vanzant. I hope you will decide to engage in more structured conversations.

# NOT *"Gaytard"*

*Continued from page 8*

little brothers and sisters to look up to me and know that I stood up for myself. So I went to the restaurant the next morning, turned in my uniform, and told the daytime manager why I was quitting. He tried to make me give the name tag back, but I told him I was keeping it.

After I started telling my story publicly, Taco John's International put out astatement saying they take harassment in their restaurants seriously, but they said it was up to the local franchise in Yankton to do something about the humiliation I faced. Well, all the local franchise did about it was say that the name tag was my idea and that I thought it was funny.

It wasn't my idea, and I never thought it was funny. It's a mean, ugly word that makes fun of both gay people and people with developmental disabilities, and I would never call myself a name like that.

That's why today, the American Civil Liberties Union is helping me file formal charges of discrimination with the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Taco John's called me a gaytard.

ACT NOW

It was wrong for the manager to humiliate me like that, and it was wrong for Taco John's International to refuse to do anything about what happened at a restaurant with their name. I want other LGBT people to know that this type of harassment is illegal, even in places like South Dakota. And I hope we can make sure nobody who works at any Taco John's ever has to go through that kind of humiliation at work again.

# Belgrade Pride Parade Held

The Belgrade Pride Parade was held on Sept. 28 and was joined by of a large number of politicians and ambassadors. The event saw a heavy police presence, although there were no major incidents. Officials from the Serbian government and foreign embassies joined the parade, including US Ambassador Michael Kirby and Belgrade Mayor Sinisa Mali. About 50 young men bearing nationalist insignia tried to break through to Slavija at the intersection of the streets Beogradska and Njegoseva. They threw rocks at the police, but were driven back. Elswhere in Belgrade, more than 5,000 supporters of "Dveri" gathered on the same day as the parade at the Republic Square. A large number of priests were among those gathered. They could be heard saying: "God did not bless the gay parade, but did bless this gathering". One of the leaders of the movement, Bosko Obradovic, said that they will "not withdraw from Belgrade streets until the parade is canceled."

# Next St. Patrick's Day Parade: *Gay OK*

A decision by organizers of the city's St. Patrick's Day Parade to allow one gay organization to march is a disappointment after decades of fighting by gay groups for full participation, several advocates said in reaction to the parade organizer's recent decision.

Some were dismayed that the organizers had chosen just one lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender group to participate next year after ending a ban on them. Others expressed continuing mistrust.

Nathan Schaefer, executive director of Empire State Pride Agenda, called the announcement "disappointing and self-serving."

"While this development is long overdue, inviting one group to march at the exclusion of all others ... is a far stretch from the full inclusion we deserve," Schaefer said.

Sarah Kate Ellis, president of the gay-rights group GLAAD, said parade organizers — who announced other gay groups could apply for the parade in 2016 and afterward — "must be held accountable" to that pledge.

"As an Irish-Catholic American, I look forward to a fully inclusive St. Patrick's Day Parade that I can share with my wife and children, just as my own parents shared with me," Ellis said.

The New York City Saint Patrick's Day Parade Committee said Wednesday that OUT@NBCUniversal, an LGBT resource group at the company that broadcasts the parade, would be marching up Manhattan's Fifth Avenue on March 17 under an identifying banner.

Parade Committee vice chairman John Lahey said the NBC group's application was the only one the committee had received from a gay group for next year's parade. He also said, "We don't encourage or discourage applications from other groups."

*Irish Queers issues this statement:*

Along with the scores of LGBT individuals, groups, and allies who have fought since 1991 for a parade that includes the whole Irish community is learning about the change in the NYC St. Patrick's Day parade at the same time as the rest of New York City and the Irish community. We welcome this cracking of the veneer of hate, but so far Irish LGBT groups are still not able to march in our community's parades. The fight continues.

This is a deal that was made behind closed doors between parade organizers and one of their last remaining sponsors, NBC. It allows NBC's gay employees to march, but embarrassingly has not ended the exclusion of Irish LGBT groups. The parade organizers have said, astoundingly, that we "can apply" in years to come.

To the extent that parade organizers have changed their tune, it's the result of Irish Queers' many years of organizing, which led to last year's refusal to march by Council Speaker Mark-Viverito, Mayor de Blasio and others, the withdrawal of major corporate sponsors and escalating criticism of uniformed city workers marching in the Parade.

We welcome this small victory, but our call remains the same -- the parade must be open to Irish LGBT groups, not "in subsequent years" but now.

# PA Teachers Sue to Protect Rights

Shouldn't Pennsylvania's public schoolteachers have the right to choose what charities they financially support? asked the Fairness Center. That's the crux of a lawsuit announced filed in Lancaster County court in late Sepember by the center on behalf of two Pennsylvania teachers..

The plaintiffs are Jane Ladley and Chris Meier.

Jane Ladley is a 25-year veteran of the Pennsylvania public school system. She recently retired from Avon Grove School District in Chester County, not long after the district went "agency shop," requiring all teachers to either join the teachers unions or pay a lesser "fair share fee."

Ladley's status as a religious objector to the union was accepted by the PSEA in 2013 and her money, rather than funding her chosen charity, has been held in escrow since then.

Chris Meier, a father of three, currently teaches history and economics at Penn Manor High School in Lancaster County, where he has been employed for the last ten years. He is also a "bona fide religious objector" whose charity of choice has been arbitrarily rejected by the PSEA.

"I want freedom of choice—to be able to donate to the charity I choose," commented Meier. Both Meier and Jane Ladley, a retired teacher from Chester County, are religious objectors to the teachers' union. In lieu of paying dues, the law allows for religious objectors to contribute to an IRS-approved charity of their choice. But their money is being held in escrow by the PSEA, rather than being forwarded to the charities Meier and Ladley have chosen as state law permits.

The only restriction the law specifies is that it must be a "nonreligious charity." Both Meier and Ladley have selected nonreligious charities to receive their money, but officials from the PSEA have refused to release their funds and have suggested their own charities.

Meier and Ladley's request is simple: They should be free to choose the charity they support. It is their money, it is their choice, and the law is on their side.

"They are telling me which groups I have to choose," Ladley remarked. "It's a wrong that needs to be righted. I'm doing this on principle and for the other teachers coming up through the ranks, so that they have these options available to them."

# Ally in the Academy

*By Trum Simmons*
*Harrisburg Area Community College*

"Love is not love which alters when it alteration finds." This line from one of my favorite Shakespeare sonnets (No. 116) has been rolling around in my head for several months now.

The legalizing of same-sex marriage in Pennsylvania has brought much joy to so many people, which in turn has brought much joy to many of us who have always been able to marry legally.

I have spoken with several recently married LGBTQ couples over the past few weeks, and all of them say that being married is indeed a big deal and that it has changed their relationships in ways they didn't expect.

All told me it has enriched their lives. It has touched my heart to hear someone remark that saying "my husband" or "my wife" has added tenderness to their expressions of love for one another.

Now of course some say they are still getting used to saying "this is my husband/wife" in introducing their partner to a stranger, but no one I've spoken with seems to mind the challenge.

And then there is the new wife who told me her daughter said, "I am so happy that I am no longer a bastard," after having been one for all the years her two moms were living together before marriage became legal.

Newlyweds might want to read the sonnet mentioned above, for it begins this way. "Let me not to the marriage of true minds / Admit impediments. Love is not love / Which alters when it alteration finds."

**...being married is indeed a big deal and... it has changed their relationships in ways they didn't expect.**

I've always loved the second line and my wonderful wife has heard me say it to her as a testament of the steadfastness of my love for her, come what may. It's a classic.

But listen again to the first line, which has particular resonance for LGBTQ persons. "Admitting impediments" is surely a reference to the traditional marriage ceremony when those assembled are asked if anyone has objections to the couple being married, and are then enjoined to be quiet if they have none.

Well, talk about impediments! Same-sex couples were not even allowed to apply for a marriage license until what seems now like just the other day. A first-class impediment, I'd say.

There are lots of couples who don't much believe in marriage, who, although strongly committed to one another, don't want to take part in what they see as a patriarchal system. Good for them—they have good reasons.

But especially good for all those LGBTQ couples who have decided to take the plunge into the often-troubled waters of marriage. Good for them, and may they do what needs to be done to keep their commitment going.

Which brings me back to Shakespeare's sonnet. He knows about the challenges and pitfalls of marriage. Love "is an ever-fixed mark, / that looks on tempests, and is / never shaken."

Oh sure—this is idealistic. But we need some idealism if we are to keep a relationship going. No marriage is going to be perfect, and no one is going to be able to live up to the standards of this sonnet.

Shakespeare said lots of things about love, and perhaps we don't know what he really thought about it. He may have been idealistic in Sonnet No. 116, but he sure had many of his characters say some pretty cynical things about love in his plays.

One of my favorites is from "As You Like It," when he has Rosalind say this to Orlando, who has been mooning about over the trials of love. "Men have died, from time to time, and worms have eaten them, but not for love."

I just love that line!

This Thanksgiving newly married LGBTQ couples have much to be thankful for. In many—but not all—families there will be a new glow as members gather to celebrate. I say not all, because plenty of newlywed LGBTQ couples will still not be welcome at the table. We have a way to go in our search for equality and acceptance.

After Thanksgiving we also enter a holiday season of peace and good will to all; think of all the folks for whom this year's festivities will for the first time be free from past hurts. Peace and good will indeed.

*Trum Simmons is professor emeritus of English and advisor emeritus to HACC Allies.*

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# Your Freedom to Succeed

making sense of life

*By Dr. Terry Drew Karanen*

*By Terry Drew Karanen*

What do you want to do with your life? What would you like to get accomplished once and for all? How many times have you tried and failed? Have you given up because it's just too hard to change? Do you feel stuck right now?

Freedom to succeed in life is a basic freedom, but it requires consistency, effort and persistence on our part to see lasting results. We often hear about overnight sensations in Hollywood and from Nashville. There is hardly ever an overnight sensation in the entertainment industry. The people who finally make it big, or get the part that changes the direction of their career, have usually been working hard at being an actor, singer or dancer long before the break occurs.

Holding onto the past is one sure-fire way to stop success in the future. One way to release the past is to do so both mentally and physically. Some practitioners of body work believe our bodies hold memories of resentments and sadness at a cellular level. The toxic residue of these obsolete ideas remains in our physical bodies. Having a skilled body worker or chiropractor can aid in the physical release of these emotional memories held onto so tenaciously by the human body.

We may have the skill or the desire to enter a new field or promote ourselves in our current profession, but lack the know-how to do so. The guidance of a mentor can be a valuable tool in our support system. Finding a suitable advisor can be as easy as sincerely approaching a person we respect, explaining what it is about their work or manner that attracts us to them and asking if they would act as our tutor.

What is holding you back from succeeding where you want to succeed? Are you letting the views of others color your decision? If we are not careful, people can stop us without much effort. We can be entirely too willing to let small setbacks make us give up on our dreams. Then we blame it on someone else, accusing others for our failure. My mother wouldn't like it if I did that. It must not be God's time for me to marry. I know I didn't get the promotion because I'm white; black; gay; straight; too old; not old enough; too fat; too tall; blah, blah, blah.

Know your own mind. Train yourself to think what you wish to think, don't just dream about what you hope will happen someday. *Be* what you wish to be, and stop *trying to be* something you really have no hope of ever becoming. Feel what you wish to feel, not what others are saying you should feel.

For this to be true our beliefs must be known deep within. This inner awareness goes beyond any doubt whatsoever; we cannot merely accept it with our intellect and not experience it in our hearts and feel it at the core of our being. It is what I call dropping it from the head, to the heart, to the gut. We must know it intellectually; we have to feel it intuitively, but are obliged to embody it in every cell of our body.

If we neglect this process and we will never have a consistent opportunity to attain the life we are seeking or seeking to maintain. Strict adherence to this method will bring about lasting success. When we reach a point where subconscious believes what we are saying, then our lives will reflect it more clearly.

If so, there is hope for your success; keeping this attitude will ensure you succeed. Without this belief you will stay stuck in limited thinking and consistently have what you don't want instead of what you do want. Releasing the past mistakes, failures and regrets is essential for moving forward. The past is over and done with. We cannot go back and change what we did or what someone else did. The present, the "now," is all that matters in this moment. The past does not have to affect our present or our future, individually or as a group, unless we decide that it should. On the other hand, our present very much *does* affect our future. What kind of tomorrow are you creating today?

*Terry Drew Karanen is an author, keynote speaker, licensed social worker and an ordained minister. He can be reached at: terry@terrydrewkaranen.com. Readers can pre-order Karanen's book, "Discovering Your Bliss: How a vision and mission help create a life worth living," at www.terrydrewkaranen.com/discovering-your-bliss.html*

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*Mary Cheney and Heather Poe*

# Mary Cheney Addresses Log Cabin Republicans

**EXCERPTS:**

"I want to be very clear here. I am not a Republican with reservations, comfortable with some core convictions but not with others. I am not a conflicted conservative, struggling to reconcile personal views with settled principles. Sometimes you hear people speak as if freedom and equality for gay Americans requires some sort of radical departure from the ideals of the party of Lincoln. And this never fails to amaze me — because I always thought freedom and equality were the ideals of the party of Lincoln.

For the record – I'm a conservative. I believe that the free market can almost always find a better, faster, and more creative solution to a problem than the government can.

I believe in the Bill of Rights, and when I read it – I don't skip from the First Amendment to the Third. The right of citizens to keep and bear arms is critically important for our nation, and I am proud to be a responsible gun owner.

And I believe that Ronald Reagan was right when he said, "Man is not free unless Government is limited."

And it is as a conservative that I believe the cornerstone of our society isn't the government — it's the family. And because of that — I believe our society must do everything we can to ensure that all families have the greatest opportunity for success.

I've said it before — and I'm sure I will say it again – all families — regardless of how they look, how they're made or where they live — all families deserve to be treated with the same respect, dignity, legal rights and recognitions as every other — I firmly believe that.

And I firmly believe that that is the true conservative position.

As Prime Minister Cameron said when he spoke in support of marriage equality in Great Britain, "I don't support gay marriage despite being a conservative. I support gay marriage because I am a conservative."

By now, I'm sure it's pretty obvious that this is an issue about which I have some rather strong feelings and one which is deeply personal for me.

As some of you may know, my partner, Heather, and I have been together for twenty-two years and we have two absolutely incredible children: a seven-year old son named Sam and a four-year old daughter named Sarah. Like most parents, we spend our weekends ferrying children to soccer games, ice-skating lessons and birthday parties – and all four of us are eagerly counting down the days to our upcoming trip to Disney World.

A little over two years ago, on the twentieth anniversary of our first date, Heather and I went before a judge here in DC and were legally married.

So here we are, two committed adults, entirely devoted to each other and to loving and raising our children together — yet depending on which state we happen to be in — we may or may not be considered a family under the law.

I know I'm not the only person in this room who has experienced firsthand what it feels like to have the law, or anyone else, say your family isn't a real family. Trust me – you tend to take it kind of personally.

But fortunately — times and opinions are changing – and changing fast.

In 1996, when Bill Clinton signed the Defense of Marriage Act into law, public opinion polls showed that only 25% of Americans supported same sex marriage.

In 2004, during the debate over the Federal Marriage Amendment, just over 1/3 of Americans said they supported equality.

Fast forward another ten years and a majority of Americans now support marriage equality — and, by my last count, same sex couples can now get legally married in nineteen states and the District of Columbia.

Momentum is certainly on the side of equality and it is moving far faster than anyone anticipated — certainly faster than I ever hoped. But even if, as many people hope, the Supreme Court decides to take up the issue this term — and even if the justices rule once and for all in favor of marriage equality — that's not going to be the end of the battle — at least not the political battle.

There will still be much work to do — particularly when it comes to educating and changing people's perceptions of same sex families.

And that's why I have been so happy to see the changes that are starting to take hold in the Republican Party.

We now have elected leaders like Rob Portman, Lisa Murkowski, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Mark Kirk, Charlie Dent, Susan Collins and others all publicly supporting marriage equality.

And earlier this year, a Pew Research poll revealed that a majority of Republicans under the age of 50 support marriage equality — lending a great deal of credence to the argument that the fight over marriage is becoming less of a partisan debate and more of a generational one instead."

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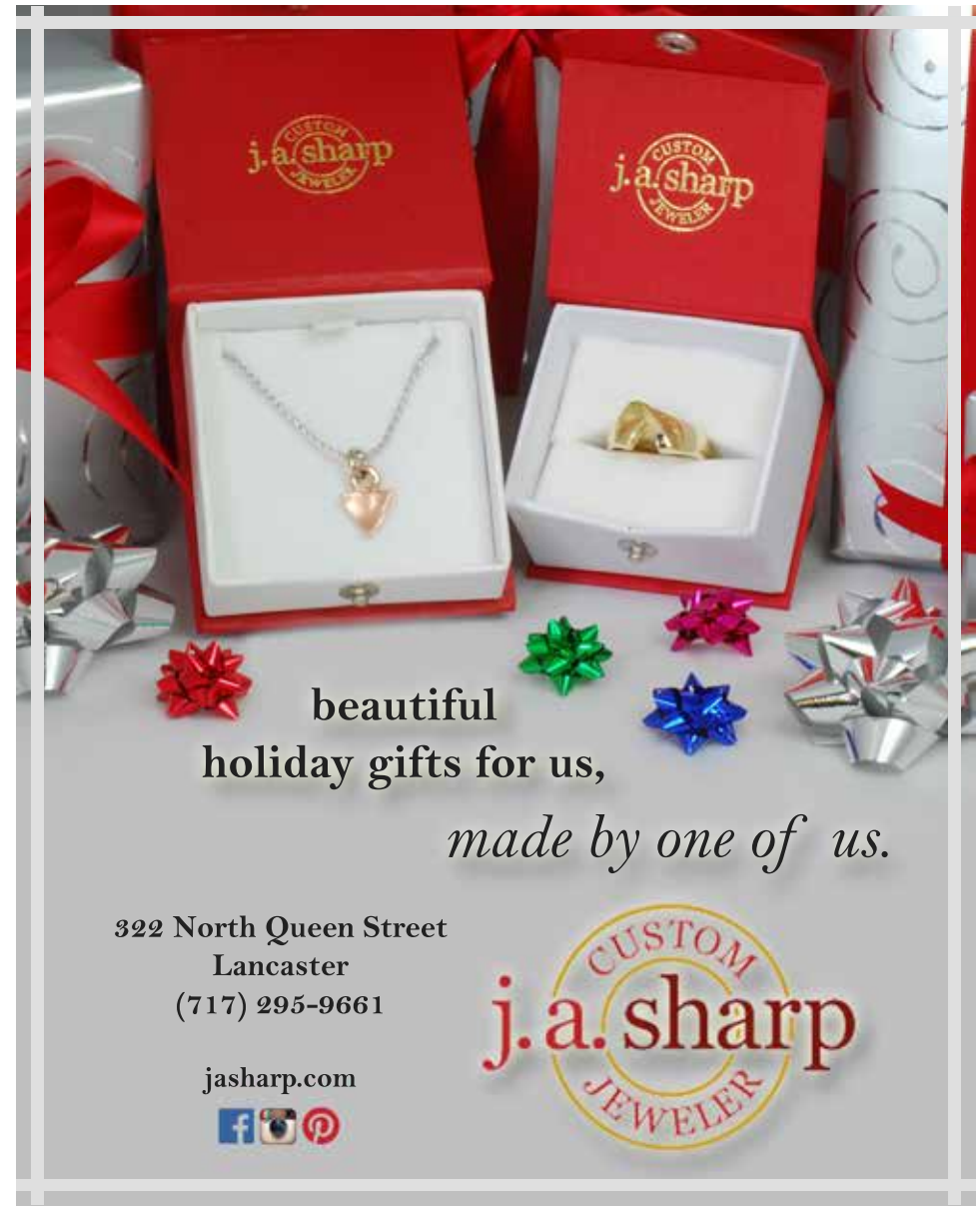




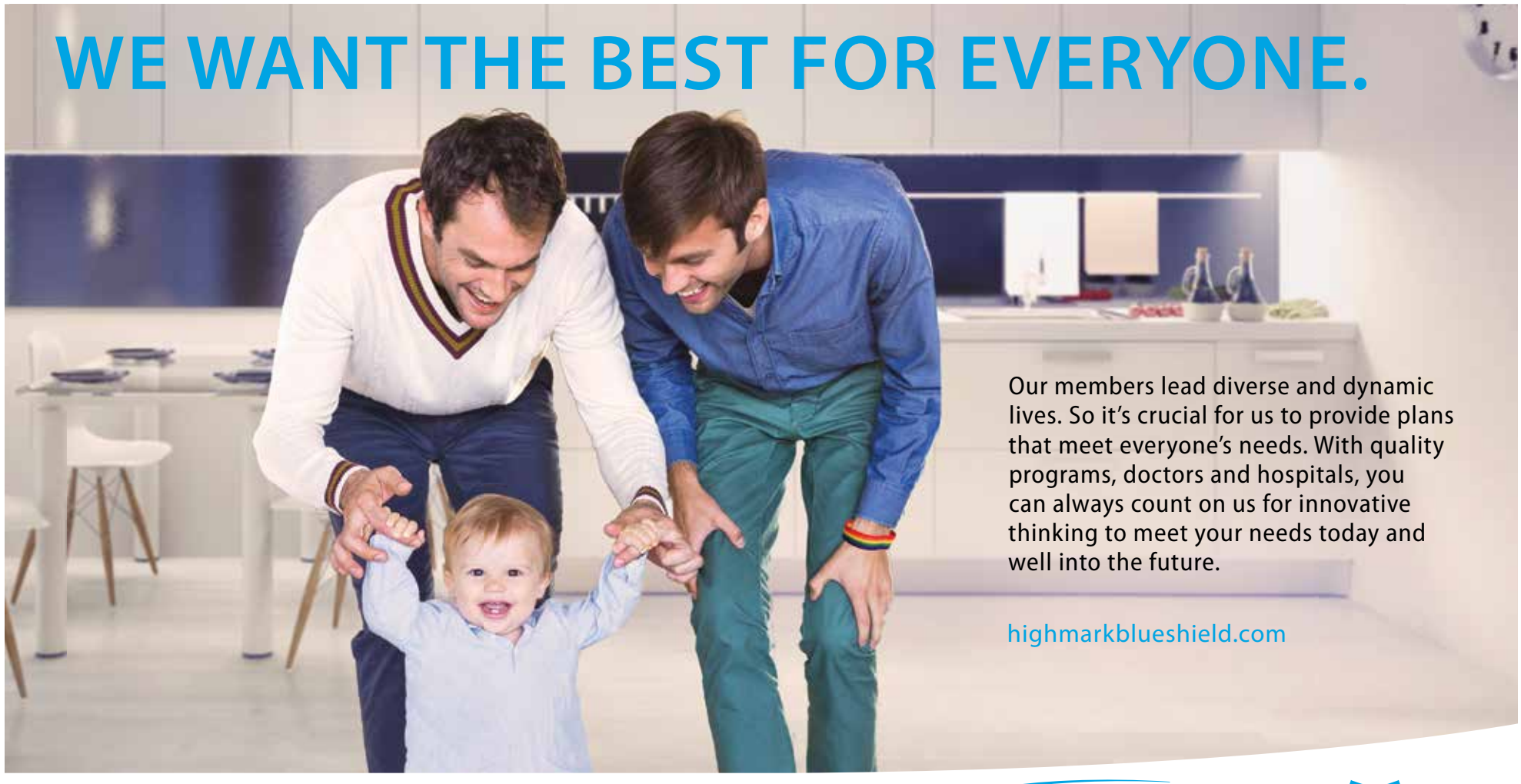
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BACK TO SCHOOL:

# 10 Gay-Friendly College Town Getaways

## *Out of Town*

*By Andrew Collins*

The next time you find yourself seeking a gay-friendly, reasonably priced, manageable vacation destination that would be ideal for a two- to three-day vacation, consider choosing one of the nation's dozens of hip and vibrant college towns. These communities tend to offer plenty to see and do, both in terms of cultural attractions and cool dining and nightlife options. And many cities dominated by academic institutions tend to be overwhelming progressive and gay-friendly – easy places to feel comfortable walking arm-in-arm with a same-sex companion, or perhaps to meet new friends.

Here are 10 favorite towns and small cities around the United States where the collegiate vibe is strong, especially in autumn, with students back on campus.

**Ann Arbor, Michigan *(visitannarbor.org)***

In eastern central Michigan, less than an hour from Detroit, hip and lively Ann Arbor is one of the Midwest best-kept gay travel secrets. Among America's largest educational institutions, the city's University of Michigan (U of M) has long been a beacon of liberal politics, high culture and vibrant campus living. It is the primary attraction for many of the city's 115,000 residents. For the many gays and lesbians, the sense of community and the overwhelming tolerance of the university, the police and government officials make this a wonderful place to call home. The city's human-scale downtown and spirited campus meld together almost imperceptibly, each feeding off the energy of the other. Visitors appreciate several superb museums at the University of Michigan and the many great restaurants and several gay-friendly nightspots downtown, with Aut Bar being the most famous.

Stay: Comprising a pair of homey, charming homes within a short walk of U of M campus, the Burnt Toast Inn (burnttoastinn.com) supplies guests with robes, slippers and yoga mats – a hearty full breakfast is included.

**Bellingham, Washington *(bellingham.org)***

The home of the pine-shaded, rolling campus of Western Washington University, outdoorsy and scenic Bellingham hugs the shoreline of Bellingham Bay, affording spectacular views of the nearby San Juan Islands. Just a 75-minute drive south of Vancouver, BC and a 90-minute drive north of Seattle, this bustling city of about 82,000 has a lively downtown buzzing with craft breweries and artisan coffeehouses – the Woods Coffee, with a patio overlooking the water is an especially inviting hangout. In the historic Fairhaven section of town, you'll find several blocks of quirky boutiques and cafes. This is a wonderful town if you're a fan of hiking, biking and kayaking.

Stay: Perched on a bluff with commanding views of the waterfront and situated just a short walk from charming Fairhaven village, the casually elegant Chrysalis Inn and Spa (thechrysalisinn.com) is a perfect roost for accessing Bellingham's great outdoors or simply treating yourself to a cushy spa retreat.

**Berkeley, California (visitberkeley.com)**

About a third of the 112,000 residents of Berkeley work for or attend U.C. Berkeley, whose reputation for liberal politics and academic excellent date back generations. This largely accounts for the heavy presence of lesbians (many of whom were among the pioneers of West Coast feminism) and gay men who have long resided here. Tourists sometimes overlook the city that's just across the bay from San Francisco, but Berkeley has plenty going for it and is an excellent – and somewhat more affordable – option for lodging. There's lots to do in this city that's famous for not only for its free-spirited attitudes but also a beautiful botanical garden, the esteemed U.C. Berkeley Art Museum, and Shattuck Avenue's "Gourmet Ghetto," a neighborhood of superb restaurants and markets headlined by Alice Waters' renowned Chez Panisse and the Cheese Board Collective, which is famed for its crispy-crust pizzas and olive focaccia. The city is also home to one of the oldest gay bars on the West Coast, the White Horse Bar.

Stay: The stylish and intimate Hotel Shattuck Plaza (hotelshattuckplaza.com) has gorgeous rooms and close proximity to U.C. Berkeley campus and the stellar dining along Shattuck Avenue.

**Boulder, Colorado *(bouldercoloradousa.com)***

Attractive Boulder (population 98,000) lies just about an hour's drive northwest of Denver and offers an enchanting, tree-shaded downtown loaded with cool shops and restaurants. A favorite place to live and visit among fans of outdoor recreation, eco-consciousness and alternative spiritualism, this gay-friendly town is a cycling, mountaineering and hiking mecca – it's an ideal base for a visit to Rocky Mountain National Park and the even closer Eldora Ski Area. The University of Colorado Boulder accounts for the politically tolerant atmosphere and the strong appreciation residents have for the fine and performing arts. The city's philharmonic orchestra is highly respected, and several music festivals draw thousands throughout the year.

Stay: The sleek, contemporary St. Julien Hotel & Spa (stjulien.com) is just a couple of blocks from the lively Pearl Street pedestrian mall, with its great shopping and café-hopping. Ask for a room with a mountain view, and consider treating yourself to the signature Canyon Rain soak, scrub and massage treatment in the hotel spa.

**Burlington, Vermont *(vermont.org)***

The largest city in one of the top states in the country when it comes to gay rights and LGBT-welcoming attitudes, Burlington (population 43,000) is home to University of Vermont and claims the state's most visible queer community. It's just 90 minutes south of Montreal and enjoys a stunning setting, with Lake Champlain on one side and the rugged Green Mountains on the other. Visitors appreciate the vast opportunities to enjoy the outdoors, plus downtown's network of redbrick sidewalks, cozy coffeehouses, great music and bookstores, and cheap eateries.

Stay: Modern yet rustic Hotel Vermont (hotelvt.com) enjoys a handy downtown location overlooking Lake Champlain and, in the distance, New York's Adirondack Mountains – try to reserve a room with this view. The décor in both guest room and public areas is artful and urbane, utilizing natural materials and earthy tones.

**Chapel Hill, North Carolina *(visitchapelhill.org)***

An idyllic, quaint university town prized for its charming downtown, Chapel Hill buzzes with great dining and shopping. The fast-growing city has a population of 58,000, many of whom are students at the prestigious University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, which is notable for its many historic, attractive buildings. Spend time strolling through the hipster-favored West End, with its many inviting restaurants and shops. You'll find gay bars in nearby Durham and Raleigh, cities also noted for their university scenes, which revolve respectively around Duke University and North Carolina State.

Stay: Upscale and boutique-y, the Franklin Hotel (franklinhotelnc.com) is set along Chapel Hill's liveliest thoroughfare and close to campus – rooms and suites are large and graciously furnished.

**Eugene, Oregon *(eugenecascadescoast.org)***

Home to the University of Oregon (U of O), this vibrant center for education, the arts, and outdoors activities has a vibrant, politically active LGBT community. The Willamette River curves in a southeasterly direction through Eugene (population 160,000), fringed with bike trails and walkways and traversed by a couple of pedestrian bridges. Beyond hiking and biking, favorite activities include wine-touring in the surrounding Willamette Valley and exploring the locavore-driven dining, coffeehouse, and brewpub scene downtown and, especially, in the up-and-coming Whiteaker neighborhood.

Stay: Steps from the indie shops and restaurants of Fifth Street Public Market, the hip and elegant Inn at the 5th (innat5th.com) has 70 rooms outfitted with gas fireplaces, cozy window seats, and high-tech amenities – on-site perks include a wine-tasting room and spa.

**Gainesville, Florida *(visitgainesville.com)***

Sure, when you think of Florida vacations, you're probably inclined to head to the

*Continued >*

# Chamber on the move

*By Bill Krenz*

Central Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce

## Chamber Annual Meeting

The Central Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce is proud to announce our eighth Annual Meeting and Dinner will be held Jan. 28, 2015 at The Hotel Hershey.

This year's theme is "Creating Change, Leaving a Legacy", and we will highlight the work the chamber is doing in the region to promote business equality in our region and beyond.

The chamber will also celebrate its unprecedented third consecutive national recognition.

The Excellence in Community Impact award was presented to the chamber by the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce to honor our work in creating real, tangible change for the LGBT community that has had significant and lasting positive impact on individuals not only in our region but also statewide.

We are excited to have two widely recognized leaders speak at our event. Alicia Richards, of ABC27 is our keynote speaker and State Representative Brian Sims is our guest speaker.

To register for the annual dinner go to - cpglcc.org. If you are interested in sponsoring this year's dinner, contact Harry Young, vice president and Annual Meeting and Dinner Chair, at hyoung@cpglcc.org.

**Future events**

Nov. 18 - Business Networking Mixer with The Foundation for Enhancing Communities at Alder Health Services, 100 North Cameron Street, Harrisburg.

Dec. 10 - Business Networking Mixer with Goldcrafters Corner on Route 22, Harrisburg. Stephanie Long, owner, will display her works of art.

**Past events**

Chamber members and guests enjoyed a fabulous mixer at ser David's & Company in Lemoyne on September 17.

The October 15 mixer was held at Juice & Grind in Lemoyne, and was hosted by Holtgate Podiatry and Ernest Fontaine DDS Dentistry.

The chamber has also participated in PrideFest 2014 at Millersville University, Out on Britton at Dickinson College, Highmark's National Coming Out Day Celebration, and the YWCA Hanover Hispanic American Center's Diversity Summit.

*Contact: www.cpglcc.org*

Join us for our 8th Annual Meeting and Dinner
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creating change,
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With Special Guests
Guest Speaker
Keynote Speaker
Brian Sims, State Representative
Alicia Richards, Co-Anchor, ABC 27
Central Pennsylvania Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce
visit cpglcc.org to purchase tickets


## College Towns *Continued*

coast, but don't forget charming Gainesville (population 128,000), which is home to University of Florida. In the downtown core, you'll find a wealth of hip hangouts, from the lively University Club gay bar to mainstream but LGBT-popular eateries like Volta Coffee and The Top tavern. And if you are craving a visit to the beach, take heart – historic St. Augustine and its sandy beaches are just a 90-minute drive east.

Stay: It may be part of a predictable chain, but the Hampton Inn & Suites Gainesville-Downtown (hamptoninnandsuitesgainesville.com) has a terrific central location steps from downtown dining and nightlife, and the rooms are meticulously kept.

**Madison, Wisconsin (visitmadison.com)**

About 243,000 people live in this liberal stronghold of the northern Midwest, the state capital and home to the University of Wisconsin, which is also the district of openly lesbian U.S. Senator Tammy Baldwin. The city's good vibes have inspired Money magazine to name it the best place to live in America. Other notable rankings include its selection as one of Outside magazine's "Dream Towns," one of Bicycling magazine's "Best Bicycling Cities," and one of Cosmo's top cities for finding single men straight and gay. At the same time, Madison has a unified and highly visible feminist community. Much of the cultural and entertainment action here revolves around the University of Wisconsin, which lies along the beautiful shores of Lake Mendota.

Stay: Steps from Lake Mendota, the stately Gothic Revival Livingston Inn (livingstoninnmadison.com) contains four smartly furnished rooms with working fireplaces.

**New Haven, Connecticut *(visitnewhaven.com)***

This coastal Connecticut city just 90 minutes by train from New York City enjoyed a dramatic renaissance over the past decade. New Haven (population 130,000) is a cultural powerhouse, with a rich history, dynamic and in some cases cutting-edge architecture, a critically acclaimed theater scene, and Yale University's academic prestige. More recently, New Haven has seen an influx of fantastic restaurants, hip shopping and trendy nightspots, making this gay-friendly, well-educated city a highly appealing weekend retreat.

Stay: The comfy and contemporary New Haven Hotel (newhavenhotel.com) has spacious rooms, a large fitness center, and a great location within easy walking distance of gay bars, the city's atmospheric Little Italy (be sure to dine at historic Frank Pepe's pizzeria), the downtown Village Green and Yale's stately Gothic-style campus.

*Andrew Collins produces the website GayTravel.About.com and writes about travel for a variety of LGBT and mainstream publications.*

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# Sean Hannity

*By D'Anne Witkowski*

By now you've heard of Adrian Peterson, the professional footballer charged with child abuse. The case has ignited a national debate about spanking and what "counts" as abuse. The takeaway: Americans love to hit children.

The most common defense is: "My mom and/or dad beat my ass, and I turned out fine." To which I say, "Uh, you turned into a full grown adult who hits children. But, hey, we all have our own definitions of 'fine,' I guess."

I find it hard to excuse a man who's over 6 feet tall and almost 220 pounds whipping a 4-year-old boy with a tree branch until said boy has cuts all over his body, including his testicles. But a lot of people are coming to Peterson's defense, saying he has the right to discipline his child and that it isn't anybody else's business.

One of those people is Sean Hannity of Fox News shame. Kind of. During Hannity's Sept. 16 radio show he said, "I do believe Adrian Peterson went too far."

That said, Hannity is awfully worried that enforcing laws against child abuse will lead to banning the teaching of conservative so-called values.

"This is my problems with liberals," he says. "Because here's where my fear goes with all of this. You guys want to tell parents what they can and cannot do. For example, is it going to become illegal if a parent teaches the politically correct view that being gay is not normal?"

Unless you're a paranoid conservative who believes big guv'ment is coming to get your guns and your god and your freedom, this might seem like an illogical argument. But Hannity has no need for logic. Which is how Hannity manages to simultaneously argue that Peterson "went too far" and that parents have the right to discipline their children as they see fit. And also to tell them terrible things about the gays.

**Hannity is awfully worried that enforcing laws against child abuse will lead to banning the teaching of conservative so-called values.**

I'd also like to point out that I don't think Hannity knows what "politically correct" means. Because it is not the "politically correct view" that gays are abnormal. At this point in time, that would probably be the politically incorrect view.

He goes on to say, "I think we've gotten to the point where if we don't politically correct our kids, we might as well just hand our kids over to the government the day they're born and let them raise them."

In this instance, he is using "politically correct" as a euphemism for discipline, maybe? But one thing is for sure, if Americans can't slap their kids around {ITAL because freedom}, then the terrorists have won.

Hannity's co-host, Noelle Nikpour, keeps intoning that Peterson has the right to discipline his child. And then she calls busting him for child abuse "a gateway offense."

"Meaning how far do you want government in your life?" she asks. "There's a difference in discipline and abuse."

Well, no shit. But if it's already been established that Peterson "went too far," isn't Nikpour then defending child abuse? This woman is an idiot.

But Hannity really isn't interested in talking about the whole abuse thing. "My problem here is do parents have the right to instill their values in their children? The problem is we send these kids off to school and maybe they're taught … values that contradict whatever the parents are teaching, whatever it happens to be. You know, 'Heather Has Two Mommies,' 'daddy's roomates,' that's the government circumventing parental values."

It's a ridiculous, and homophobic, argument. In Hannity's world, abusers aren't the enemy, gays are.

Parents have the right to teach their children whatever stupid shit they want under the guise of "values." But adults don't have the right to beat the shit out of kids. And it's unconscionable that we are debating this in what we claim is a civilized society.

Then again, Hannity has never been wild about people who need help from the government. And that extends to children.

*D'Anne Witkowski has been gay for pay since 2003. She's a freelance writer and poet (believe it!). When she's not taking on the creeps of the world she reviews rock and roll shows in Detroit with her twin sister and teaches writing at the University of Michigan.*

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# Catholics United Asks Archbishop to Engage Transgender Community

A transgender teen ended his own life Aug. 18 in Croydon, Pennsylvania jumping in front of an Amtrak train near Croydon station.

Ben Finley, *Phila. Inquirer.*, reported that Jessica Moscatel came out as transgender in 11th-grade English class this spring. The teen asked classmates and teachers to call him Riley Matthew Moscatel from then on. They did. The request met little resistance at Bucks County Technical High School, which has other transgender or openly gay students. "Everyone supported him," said a friend, Kate Cimino, who will be a junior this year. "Everyone loved Riley. He was everyone's best friend."

Still, Riley experienced emotional difficulties in making his adjustment.

*Riley Matthew Moscatel, a Bucks County Technical High School student, died on a railroad track in Philadelphia's Bristol Twp.*

According to his family and friends, 17 year old Riley Matthew Moscatel had been experiencing depression for years. Moscatel was frustrated about his body and was struggling with his gender identity. According to news reports, he posted on his Instagram account that he was a prisoner of his own body not long before his death.

Riley Moscatel was raised in a Catholic family. His funeral services were held at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church in Croydon, PA and Fr. Michael Davis presided.

Riley's death, says Catholics United, underscores the general lack of support services available to LGBT Catholics and raises questions about how the Catholic church's teachings on gender identity contributed to Riley's mental state when he took his own life.

In the wake of this tragedy, Catholics United, a non-profit, non-partisan organization, calls on Archbishop Charles Chaput to foster greater pastoral care when ministering to the needs of LGBT Catholics living within the archdiocese.

"The Catholic church is facing a crossroads. At a time when more and more Americans are recognizing the equality of LGBT people, the Catholic church perpetuates mental illness by referring to gay and transgender people as 'intrinsically disordered.' This type of stigmatization contributes to lower-self esteem and certainly contributes to a higher rate of suicide for LGBT individuals," said James Salt, executive director of Catholics United. "In the wake of Riley's death, it is incumbent of Archbishop Chaput to reflect on this tragedy and find ways to recognize the dignity of LGBT Catholics."

Currently, there is a movement within the church to reconsider how the church treats LGBT individuals. In response to a question about whether a gay priest could serve within his Vatican administration, Pope Francis famously responded, "Who I am to judge?". This answer effectively ended an official Vatican policy of discrimination against celibate gay priests and seminarians. Pope Francis is scheduled to visit Philadelphia in September, 2015.

Pennsylvania Catholics also have a long tradition to LGBT friendly ministries that have been marginalized, or worse silenced, by the church hierarchy. The founders of New Ways Ministry, the leading pastoral care agency for LGBT Catholics, began their ministry in Philadelphia and were once the subject of a Vatican investigation. Fortunate Families, a network of Catholic families has members in the Philadelphia region and Dignity Philadelphia, a network of LGBT Catholics, was one of the first chapters of its kind in the nation.

**QUICK TAKES**

## • Sims Talks to Lancaster Democrats

State Rep., Brian Sims Sept. 29 addressed the Equality Coalition of the Lancaster County Democrats on the topic of House and Senate Bills 300. The twin measures call for nondiscrimination language to be included in the state's Human Relations Act that would bar discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identification. The legislation is currently stalled in both the House and Senate.

*Info: lcdc@lancasterdems.com; www.lancasterdems.com*

## • LGBT History Lesson

Oct. 12 Dickinson College hosted a celebration "History Comes Out," an exhibit of selections from the LGBT Center of Central PA History Project. The LGBT Center of Central Pennsylvania and the Dickinson Archives and Special Collections are collaborating to collect original documents that depict stories of LGBT history in the region as told by those who lived them. The documents include written accounts, video interviews, photographs and artifacts that illustrate and support those stories. The center's History Project is a 2014 recipient of the J. Franklin Jameson Archival Advocacy Award given by the Society of American Archivists (SAA). The award honors an individual, institution, or organization that promotes greater public awareness, appreciation, or support of archives.

## transgender column

*By Jeanine Ruhsam*
*president Emerita of TransCentralPA*

## Transparent Hearts

One of the key words of this decade is "transparent." It was with full knowledge of that and a gifted ability to manipulate all the word's inherent and implied meanings that creator and director Jill Soloway chose it as the title of Amazon's runaway hit streaming drama.

"Transparent," whose entire first season was released September 26 on Amazon Prime, "is not just the best new show of the fall, it's one of the best new shows of the year," according to Huff Post's TV critic Maureen Ryan. It offers a clear window into the complicated lives and loves of a myopic modern family in Los Angeles. Soloway, whose own father was transgender, cast beloved American actor Jeffrey Tambour in the role of family patriarch Mort who becomes Maura (at age 68) as the script unfolds.

"Transparent," however, is not a show about a transgender parent- it is a multi-themed, multi-threaded drama about parenting, aging, sexuality, gender, religion, workplace issues, and identity- and, above all, about love. It brilliantly weaves complicated storylines and multiple plots together through its first ten episodes such that few viewers will be unable to resist a marathon intake of the series. It is also the best treatment of the transgender phenomena that has ever been filmed. Nothing comes close. It is an authentic, clear portrayal of a widely misunderstood human condition that signals, along with shows such as "Orange Is the New Black," that the film media has reached the "transgender tipping point."

Portrayals of transgender people and topics in the past have been overwhelmingly negative, with media watchdog GLAAD reporting that between 2002 and 2012, 54% of episodes with transgender storylines had negative representations, and another 35% ranged from "problematic" to "good."

One of the ways Soloway accomplished this was revolutionary: she hired a large number of transgender people to work with her as writers, actors, advisers- and every other below-the-line department, too. According to (trans) producer Rhys Ernst, "you can easily say that this is the most trans-inclusive production in Hollywood history, which is a sentence I never expected to say out loud."

Two who are instrumental to the series should be familiar to those in central Pennsylvania who attended TransCentralPA's "Keystone Conference" the past two years. Noted New York Times columnist, author and college professor Jenny Boylan, keynote speaker at Keystone 2013, has served as an adviser to Soloway since the show's inception. "When I was first asked to serve as an adviser to the show, I hesitated, fearing that it would get the issues all wrong, as television and film often do where transgender characters are concerned," says Boylan, acknowledging that it "shows every sign of being one of the first television shows to depict the life of its transgender heroine with grace and respect."

This past March trans comedian Ian Harvie delighted a crowd of several hundred at a dinner theater staged as part of Keystone. He was guest star in episode 7, playing the part of- yes, a trans man, the love interest of "Ali," Maura's youngest daughter, played by Gabby Hoffmann. He credits Soloway's success to her mindset of compassion. "She's driven by love, instinct and creative vision in her storytelling, and Amazon trusts her and allows her to keep those core values in the TV show-making process," says Harvie. "When she called me to officially offer me the part, I was super emotional and I thanked her and said "I won't let you down." She quickly came back with "No, I won't let YOU down!"

"Transparent" is a show with a lot of heart. You can't do much better by your own than to watch it. If you are an Amazon Prime member, it's free; if you aren't, it's a good reason to become part of Mr. Bezos' empire and access the best TV show you aren't watching at the same place you buy your blenders, books and boots.

# BISEXUALS
# INVISIBLE MAJORITY?

*Continued from page one*

Area School Board, Bonilla Jr. campaigned on transparency. In the third year of a four-year term, he feels he can't hide. He has not yet been in a relationship with a man, but says he is comfortable declaring himself as bisexual. "Do I feel that it is a fair representation of who I will be in the future? I don't know. No one ever knows what can happen in the future, but as far as right now is concerned I am a bisexual male." When Bonilla Jr. first came out as bisexual at least two of his gay friends doubted his proclamation of bisexuality, but he says, "I am being honest with myself and should not be pressured into being who I'm not." Bonilla Jr. also believes that society is more accepting of bisexual females than it is of bisexual men, "I think a majority of men who are bisexual remain in the closet because our society is more open to bisexual women."

According to the same Williams Institute study referenced earlier, women are substantively more likely than men to identify as bisexual. A Pew Research Center study from 2013 supports this statistic citing that "four-in-ten respondents identify themselves as bisexual." That means 40 percent of the LGBT community identifies as bisexual, with women making up 29 percent of that number and men 11 percent.

Janice Rael, 45, says she never considered that she had same-sex attractions until shortly before her 22nd birthday, when, after some failed relationships with men, she admitted to herself that she had crushes on women. "As soon as I met and started dating my first girlfriend, I believed I was a lesbian, and came out as one," says Rael. "It took me a few more months to come to terms with the fact that I was still attracted to men despite my interest in women. I came out again, as bisexual. I have now been with the same partner, a man, for over 21 years, but I have never lost my bi identity."

Robyn Ochs, 55, came out to herself as bisexual 38 years ago, during her first weeks at college, and she has identified as bisexual ever since. She has shared her life with a woman who identifies as a lesbian for 17 years; they've been married for 10. Ochs is the editor of the *Bi Women Quarterly* and co-editor of *Getting Bi: Voices of Bisexual around the World* and of the forthcoming anthology, *RECOGNIZE: The Voices of Bisexual Men*, which is due out September 1. "I call myself bisexual because I acknowledge that I have the potential to be attracted—romantically and sexually—to people of more than one sex/gender, not necessarily at the same time, not necessarily in the same way, and not necessarily to the same degree," explains Ochs.

We all might agree that human sexuality is more complex than simply black and white, and more akin to something with varying degrees of gray. But, in mainstream

society, sexual fluidity also seems to be more acceptable among women (think: Drew Barrymore or Anna Paquin) because it's cool and chic and even sexy, but for men? Well, not so much. Many may recall when handsome Olympic diver, Tom Daley, came out as bisexual…only to come out as gay a few months later and acknowledge he was dating Oscar-winning screenwriter Dustin Lance Black.

"I fully understand the psychological impetus to come out that way, and since it happens all the time, I think people just assume that everyone who says they're bisexual is just on the road to something else," admits Waters. As such, there's a notion, primarily among gay guys, that men who say they're bisexual are not being honest with themselves. "For many people, it's a method of self-protection from the backlash—often from conservative family members/friends—of being otherwise just gay, while still allowing yourself to introduce yourself as a non-straight person," continues Waters.

What this creates, however, is an invisibility factor for bisexuals, because they're still stuck in that closet that gays and lesbians have been pushing themselves out from in greater and greater numbers in recent years. "It is joked that bi men are mythical unicorns, since we don't always see out bi men asserting themselves as bi," states Rael. "Sometimes I feel invisible, living as a suburban housewife married [to a man] for 20 years. I am afraid that people make incorrect assumptions about me based on the gender of my significant other. I want to be authentic, I want to be real. I don't want to hide who I am or who I love. But many bi people prefer the closet, to avoid discrimination and prejudice."

*Bonilla*

*Rael*

*Ochs*

The perception of bisexuality in the LGBT community is troubling for all of those we spoke to because it denies a subset of people their authenticity, their truth. "In the mainstream and in LGBT communities there are huge social costs to coming out as bi, so many people refrain from speaking up. And one of the main challenges faced by bi folks is that we are simply not seen, not imagined. When people see a man and a woman in a relationship, they read them as two heterosexuals. When people see two women in a relationship, they read them both as lesbians. And two men together are read as gay. So only a small subset of bisexuals—those like me who loudly and persistently claim this identity, and those who are currently in polyamorous relationships with people of more than one gender and out about it—get read as bi," explains Ochs.

We've all heard the myths about bisexuality: It's just a phase, they're confused, it's just a pit stop away from gay. But what all those we spoke to seem to agree on is that fluidity is a huge component of all human sexuality, not just bisexuality. "Any identity can be a phase—identities are just words that we use to describe ourselves to others. I have no doubt that there are men currently identifying as bi who will later identify as gay. There are also men who identify as gay, or as straight, who will later identify as bi, and men who identify as bi who will continue to identify as bi. And there are men who privately identify as bi but allow others to assume that they are straight or gay. It's certainly the easiest route to take," explains Ochs.

Herein lies the inherent problem, as bisexuals closet themselves fewer bisexuals come forward, but this begs the questions: Why should they have to come out publicly, and why do they have to prove themselves and their very existence? "It's pretty ridiculous to try to convince people that I exist, so I can't really be bothered with that, and I don't say that in a dramatic way. I am just not interested in debating my very existence with someone whose arms are folded tight," Waters says.

Attractions have both physical and emotional manifestations and until we've walked in another's shoes we shouldn't be so quick to label or assume each person's journey is the same as our own. "There are plenty of gay men who used to be married, and so they assume that because they were married to a woman, and now gay, that everybody else who might like women is following the same path. In all areas of life, not just pertaining to matters of sexuality, it is so important to remember that your experience is not necessarily going to be the experience of someone else. Not only is that okay, but that's the way it ought to be. Not only do you have permission to be yourself, you are supposed to be yourself. People come to their own understandings of themselves on their own time, and in different ways, and they might end up differently than you did," asserts Waters.

To put people in a neatly defined box that everybody can understand may be a matter of habit, but it's not necessarily productive. "I understand that each of us must choose the label that best suits us, or reject labels if that is your preference. I can see why it is easier for bi people in same-sex relationships to let people assume that they are gay or lesbian. I hope to one day see more bi people embrace their own orientation and come out of the closet. I hope to see more acceptance of bi people from both straight and gay communities. I hope that one day, bisexuality is recognized as the normal, stable orientation that it is," says Rael.

# Report Details High Rates of Violence, Discrimination toward Bisexual People

According to a new report released, while more than half of the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community identifies as bisexual, bisexual people are vulnerable to poverty, discrimination, and poor physical and mental health outcomes—often at rates higher than their lesbian and gay peers.

*Understanding Issues Facing Bisexual Americans* is a guide offering an overview of the economic and health disparities facing the bisexual community, and recommendations for supporting bisexual people through advocacy, research, and programming. The resource was developed by BiNet USA, the Bisexual Resource Center, and the Movement Advancement Project (MAP). The report is available at www.lgbtmap.org/understanding-issues-facing-bisexual-americans.

"Despite comprising the largest population within the LGBT community, bisexual people are among the most invisible," said Ineke Mushovic, executive director of the Movement Advancement Project. "The failure to account for bisexual lives and experiences compounds a lack of social support and keeps bisexual people in the closet."

Bisexual people experience significant health, safety, and economic disparities. These include:

**POVERTY**: Approximately 25% of bisexual men and 30% of bisexual women live in poverty, compared to 15% and 21% of heterosexual men and women, respectively, and 20% and 23% of gay men and lesbians.

**EMPLOYMENT**: While 20% of bisexuals report experiencing a negative employment decision based on their sexual orientation, almost 60% of bisexual people report hearing anti-bisexual jokes and comments on the job. Nearly half of bisexual people report that they are not out to any of their coworkers (49%), compared to just 24% of lesbian and gay people.

**VIOLENCE**: Bisexual women experience significantly higher rates of violence—both overall and intimate partner violence—compared to lesbians and straight women: 46% of bisexual women have experienced rape, compared to 13% and 17% of lesbian and straight women, respectively. Bisexual men also report higher rates of sexual violence; nearly half of bisexual men (47%) report experiencing sexual violence other than rape in their lifetime.

**SUICIDE:** One study found bisexuals were four times more likely, and lesbian and gay adults two times more likely, to report attempted suicide than straight adults.

"Bisexual people often face pervasive stereotypes and myths surrounding bisexuality," said Ellyn Ruthstrom, president of the Bisexual Resource Center. "The fear of being stereotyped manifests itself in a real way: bisexual people are six times more likely than gay men and lesbians to be closeted. This impacts the emotional well-being of many bisexual people and is a contributing factor to the community's higher rates of poor physical and mental health."

**bisexual people are six times more likely than gay men and lesbians to be closeted**

"More and more organizations are realizing that they need specific resources and programming for bisexual people," said Faith Cheltenham, president of BiNet USA. "Cultural competence and deliberate and thoughtful visibility will support the bisexual community and combat stigma and discrimination against bisexual people."

*BiNet USA is America's civil-rights & advocacy group for all bisexual, fluid, pansexual, and queer-identified people, and their families, friends, and allies. www.binetusa.org*

## FACTS:

### Bisexual Men Have Higher STI Rates than Gays

Men who have sex with men and women (MSMW) have a much higher rate of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) when compared with gay or straight men, ScienceDaily Reports. Publishing their findings in American Journal of Preventive Medicine, researchers at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) conducted a review of studies pertaining to MSMW published between 2008 and 2013.

MSMW make up an estimated 2 percent of the sexually active males in the United States.

The researchers found that while the prevalence of HIV is lower among MSMW when compared with gay men, MSMW are more likely than straight men to be living with the virus. MSMW are also less likely to undergo HIV testing than either gay or straight men. Twenty-one percent of MSMW reported receiving treatment for STIs in the past year, compared with 12 percent of gay men and 2.3 percent of heterosexual men.

The investigators theorized that behavioral elements may account for the disproportionate rates of HIV and STIs among MSMW. When compared with gay or straight men, MSMW may use condoms less frequently, start having sex earlier, be more likely to experience rape, have more sexual partners, be more inclined toward substance abuse, be more likely to have sex for money or goods, and may be more likely to have sex with male or female partners who themselves have higher risk factors for HIV or STIs. In addition, social stigma toward bisexuals may play a role in the higher HIV and STI rates among MSMW, as may economic concerns and pressures to conform to a masculine ideal.

"MSMW's attitudes toward pregnancy influence their sexual health. Qualitative data from black men suggest that desires to prevent pregnancy may prompt some MSMW to consistently use condoms with women," William L. Jeffries IV, PhD, MPH, writes in the paper. "Yet, MSMW may avoid condom use when their female partners use other contraceptives or when female partners perceive condom use as a sign of relationship infidelity. Further, MSMW's desires to produce offspring biologically may prompt sex without a condom with female partners. In this regard, desires for fatherhood may indirectly increase these men's vulnerability to HIV/STIs and transmission of these infections within their sexual networks."

# Bully, Slap, and Rape Away *"The Gay"*

*by Central Voice*

*Daniel Ashley Pierce*

Sometimes coming-out stories are heartwarming tales of acceptance and love. Other times they are tragic accounts of abandonment and abuse.

Daniel Ashley Pierce, a 20-year-old from Georgia, came out as gay last October. At the time, his father was unresponsive and his stepmother seemed supportive. However, things took a turn for the worse when Pierce found himself a part of what he describes as a "delayed intervention" involving his father, stepmother and grandparents. He apparently captured footage of the interaction on camera.

"I wanted to make sure there was evidence in case something happened," Pierce told The Huffington Post in an email.

*VIDEO: www.youtube.com/watch?v=1df_i26wh-w*

Pierce's video began going viral after it was posted by Dan Savage with Seattle's The Stranger. In the five-minute clip, which does not focus on any individual's face, the people in the room with Pierce can be heard telling him his sexuality is a choice. When he disputes that, they use religion as an argument.

"No, you can believe that if you want to," a woman, presumably his grandmother, can be heard saying, "but I believe in the word of God, and God creates nobody that way. It's a path that you have chosen to choose. ... You go by all the scientific stuff you want to. I'm going by the word of God." She goes on to say that since Pierce has "chosen that path" they will no longer support him and he needs to move out because she "will not let people believe that I condone what you do."

Pierce asks his stepmother if he can stay in the house, but she refuses.

"You're full of s**t," she says. "You told me on the phone that you made that choice. You know you wasn't born that way. You know damn good and well you made that choice. You know that [your father] has done everything he can to raise you. ... He didn't need to blame himself."

At this point, an apparent physical altercation occurs. The camera starts moving, and Pierce can be heard yelling to the woman to stop hitting him. A man yells, "You're a damn queer." At the end of the video, someone calls him "a disgrace."

**Rape away the gay**

A gay Mississippi man says a male teacher at the Baptist school he attended in the 1990s raped him each week for three years as a way to force him to change his sexual orientation.

Jeff White told the Washington Blade during a July 14 interview at a restaurant near his home on the Mississippi Gulf Coast the teacher at Bethel Baptist School in Walls, Miss., who he identified as Steven Barnes, scheduled an "appointment" with him each Wednesday in his classroom or the office where he forced him to have oral and anal sex.

*Jeff White*
*Photo: Brandiilyne Dear*

White, now 32, said the incidents took place at the school, which is in DeSoto County in northwestern Mississippi, between 1996-1999. The DeSoto County Sheriff's Department on Tuesday confirmed to the Blade the National Center for Lesbian Rights has filed a complaint on White's behalf against Barnes.

An embargoed press release the Blade obtained from the National Center for Lesbian Rights identifies Barnes, who is currently an associate pastor at Bethel Baptist Church, which operates Bethel Baptist School, as the teacher who allegedly raped White.

"He would rape me because I was gay and because it would make me hate men and make me change," said White.

White told the Blade that his parents decided to send him to the school after he came out to them when he was 14 and in the seventh grade.

"They [the church's pastors] looked at Southern Baptists like they were liberal faggots, like they would say from the pulpit," he said. The church's website says Bethel Baptist School was founded in 1971 and is "staffed with an experienced, stable and caring staff." Tuition for the 2013-2014 academic year was $3,850 per student.

"Character and patriotism are taught in the classroom," reads a description of the school on the Bethel Baptist Church's website. "The curriculum is Bible based and every student is taught the truths of God's word."

The church's website includes a section titled "God's way to heaven" with a number of statements that include "agree that your sin must be paid for with death and hell" and "turn from your sin and trust Christ as your saviour."

"In general it was a cult," White told the Blade. "Aside from all of that other stuff going on, there was a thousand other things that they were doing." A woman who answered the phone at Bethel Baptist Church on Tuesday described White's allegations to the Blade as "the biggest lie there ever was."

# "Little Reef" Makes Big Waves

*Michael Carroll*

*Photo by Eileen O'Donnell*

*By Frank Pizzoli*

In his first collection of short stories Michael Carroll, 49, successfully employs an economy of words that describe characters deeply drawn. We've known people like them. When reading his 12 varied tales on 260 pages, I thought of a sculptor who hones away clay to display what he wants us to see. That's what Carroll does. He isn't working at it. He's just writing down the way he views the world, all absurdities noted, none judged. This is good writing. The first sentence of each story embraces the reader. You're hooked.

*From the desk of...Hunter B. Gwathmey* captures how the post-World War II generation acculturated Baby Boomer Queers. Reminded me of my own experiences that began during my college years and continued a while longer with gay men who fought in World War II. *Referred Pain* is an example of how readers often want to know about a writer more than they want to read his books.

All together, Carroll's stories represent a knew outlook on his own writing.

**Q This is your first book length manuscript. How did it come together for you?**

**A** *I wrote my first novel at age 24, a coming-of-age tale about a gay undergraduate much like The Mysteries of Pittsburgh (1988) by Michael Chabon. The short stories in this collection are all new and written within the last two to five years.*

**Q Are your more recent stories the same stylistically as other pieces you've written?**

**A** Well, they are different than my work which has appeared in Ontario Review or Boulevard or The New Penguin Book of Gay Short Stories, and other publications.

I've changed my style to shorter sentences, nothing Baroque anymore. That flowery style of writing is over for me.

**Q Where does 'clean' approach come from?**

**A** *From Richard Yates (any one of his books, though my favorites are Easter Parade, Young Hearts Crying, Disturbing the Peace), his clean style, clear action, he doesn't explain everything*

**Q The first sentence of each story is a juicy morsel. Enticing, matter of fact, right into the story. I'll bet writing those first sentences is for you?**

**A** *It is fun because that's where a story begins for me, with a single thought made into a sentence. I've given up classical structure in that these current stories do not have a calculated story arc. I'm also not big on motive. I write one sentence at a time, then the next, and allow my creative juices to flow, take the story where it goes. I never have an ending in mind. That happens as I write. When I think the story's over, it's over.*

**Q Even though your stories begin spontaneously and develop as you write, do your characters come from memory, fiction, or both? Like the French auto-fiction?**

**A** *I do pull characters and scenes from memory, from real experiences but I may take the details further than real life did.*

**Q Your humor sneaks up on readers. Does humor come to you as you write or do you go back to embellish with funny stuff in a rewrite?**

**A** *I don't try to answer existential questions, that's for sure. I make my characters say funny things as I write. I may go back and add humorous anecdotes to more fully develop the moment or a scene. But generally, I like to provide readers with 'air space' so they can fill in their own thoughts.*

**Q Your short stories read like opening chapters of novellas or full-length novels. Have any of your stories grabbed you that way, maybe the beginning of a novel?**

**A** *I intended the stories to be separate pieces even though they are linked (a character reappears). I also wanted them to be short enough for public readings. Length is not always valued in today's Twitter-length world.*

**Q Which writers do you admire?**

**A** *Women more than men. The Prime of Miss Jean Brodie (Muriel Spark) made a real impact. Spark is economical with language, spare with the descriptions and details and heavy on forward movement and action and dialogue. English author Elizabeth Taylor (Kingsley Amis called her "one of the best English novelists born in this century").*

*I love Joy Williams (State of Grace, The Quick and the Dead, and the stories in Honored Guest). Williams comes in quickly from different angles, never obvious. She's unexpectedly funny in the least expected ways. And spare, not overdone, quickly phrased without too much tired, received language. And, of course, Edmund White. We were married Nov. 8 after being together since 1995.*

**Q I wanted to ask about Edmund but at the end of our interview.**

**A** *I wrote most of the stories after Ed got sick. (White has been working through a series of strokes, on leave from Princeton with a possible return next Fall. He recently spoke at New Orleans Saints & Sinners Literary Conference.) Our relationship is well-rounded. We go on 'plot walks' to discuss whatever he's working on at the moment.*

*I needed his encouragement and support as I developed my writing. I had no fancy writing program experience. Where I may have thought I needed criticism, Ed thought I needed encouragement.*

*Little Reef and Other Stories by Michael Carroll by the University of Wisconsin Press*

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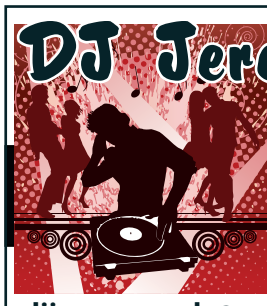

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